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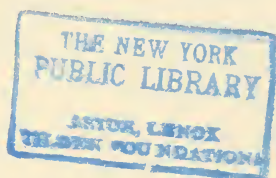


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BENJAMIN GRIFFITH

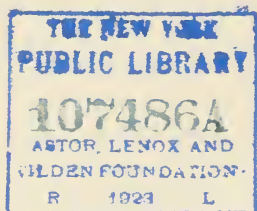
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

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TO
Elizabeth Crozer,
THE BELOVED WIFE
OF
Benjamin Griffith, D. D.,

WHO SHARED THE SUMMER OF HIS YOUTH, AND WHO
IN ALL THE CARES AND BURDENS OF HIS
PRIME WAS HIS TRUE HELPMATE,

THIS VOLUME IS
AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

C. H. B.

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BENJAMIN GRIFFITH.

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.—*The Psalms.*

There is no heroic poem in the world but is at bottom a biography, the life of a man; and there is no life of a man, faithfully recorded, but is a heroic poem of its sort, rhymed or unrhymed.—*Carlyle.*

INTRODUCTORY.

THIS volume has not been issued for the purpose of merely narrating a series of chronological events in the life of a servant of God who has left a most noble record. Such a tribute might prove of interest to many, but would fail to indicate the important motive that has prompted the editor and inspired the writers.

In the experience of individuals there come periods that are in reality critical moments, when decisions are made and duties assumed that are far-reaching in their influence, and extend beyond the narrow environment which has heretofore limited the life. Unexpectedly there is a revelation, and there follows a conscious realization that a burden has been suddenly placed upon shoulders unused to carrying a heavy load; and with this there is felt the inspiration to accept the new responsibility, to step aside from the beaten path, and with confidence in the Divine assistance assume the unsought obligation.

Critical
moments.

Experiences like these came to the subject of this biography. How manfully he bore the

burdens that fell to his lot ; the ever-widening circle of his sphere of influence ; its helpful effect upon the growth and development of the religious work he represented ; the self-sacrificing spirit with which his career was marked ; and not least, his sympathetic efforts for the young, and especially the orphan, are herein recorded.

One of the most profitable uses of history is the narrative of such lives. Having this thought in view, there is no species of writing of more value than biography. It inspires the young to nobler purposes, develops higher resolves, and proves an incentive to the laudable imitation of men who in prominent positions have proved true to principle and duty. This has been emphasized by Dr. Johnson as the "salutary influence of example." Through its power others are led to nobler deeds, and their lives and activities are animated by conviction and fervor.

Such was the career of Benjamin Griffith. He was not a genius, nor a man of extraordinary intellectual force, standing head and shoulders above his fellows in mental ability. He was a man among men, far-sighted, forceful ; clear and decided in his convictions, courageous but calm in his expressions. From the moment he assumed the responsibility for

an undertaking it entered into and became a part of his life. His purpose was intensified by his best thought and led him to develop and broaden the duty entrusted to him by every proper means at his command. In consequence, his entire career as a leader in religious and benevolent work was crowned with success.

In his first pastorate, as a young student, the little homeless church at Cumberland, Maryland, of six members, was increased by the blessing of the Master until its discouragements were removed, and a house of worship was dedicated to the service of Almighty God. In 1851, he became pastor of the New Market Street Church, in Philadelphia, occupying an old structure in an unfavorable location. During this pastorate the large and attractive meeting house of the Fourth Baptist Church, at Fifth Street and Buttonwood, was built.

Pastorates.

His pre-eminent service, in which he was highly honored, was as the executive officer of the American Baptist Publication Society. He became the corresponding secretary of this organization May 12, 1857. He found the offices located in a small store on Arch Street, near Sixth, and its business so seriously embarrassed financially that it was exceedingly difficult to meet maturing obligations. At

the time of his departure from his earthly life, after thirty-six years of continuous service, the Society had become one of the greatest of modern religious agencies for the dissemination of evangelical literature, and for carrying the gospel to the homes of the people. Its colporters and missionaries in this and other lands are rendering a service in homely paths that is attained by no other evangelical society.

Contemporary with his connection with the Publication Society was his effective work for the Baptist Orphanage in Philadelphia. Starting in a small place of temporary shelter, the institution developed under his leadership, and now owns several acres of ground and a cluster of substantial cottages, infirmary, chapel, and administration building, free from debt. The last of these, and the largest and most important, was completed, but not occupied, at the time of his death.

The Orphanage.

The story of his life, as its important periods have been focused by those associated with him in the ties of friendship or official relation, is beautiful and helpful. It is given to but few to be "lights of the world and stars of the human race"; but there are those who in less exalted spheres, manifest that faith and self-sacrificing fidelity to duty that constitute

the noblest spring of life. It is from these with whom we have daily intercourse, whose responsibilities extend beyond the average or their fellows, that we gain the most helpful and inspiring impulses in our ambitions, contests, and struggles. Thoughtful men do not fail to recognize the power of this influence, and to derive encouragement from the record of its manifestation. Thomas Carlyle formulated this thought in his expression, "There is no life of a man faithfully recorded but it is a heroic poem of its sort, rhymed or unrhymed."

The narrative of the career of Benjamin Griffith is the record of the accomplishment of great things, the honest and thorough performance of extraordinary duties that were providentially imposed. His life suggests the detail and assignment for special and honorable service that occasionally befalls the soldier in warfare who is called out from the ranks and promoted to a duty more difficult than that of his fellows. It was not in the usual sense a progressive development, but rather a series of unexpected transitions from one position of influence and action to another. Each of these stages had important problems to solve and difficulties to overcome that required wisdom and courage, but were in no wise closely related to each other.

A motherless boy at two weeks of age, without a father at twelve, spending his boyhood in the quiet of a Juniata farm, and under the tutelage of a district schoolmaster, his early life resembled that of other distinguished men of humble origin who have been a power in the world, and whose names have an honorable place on the pages of history.

A Prophetic
Parallel.

The prophetic reference to Christ, "though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel," has been paralleled in human lives by a host of men whose names and deeds are recorded in history, sacred and profane. Philosophers, statesmen, rulers, philanthropists, leaders in great movements, have had their humble origin in the "little places" of the world. From the anointing of the Bethlehemite shepherd boy as king of Israel to the present time, history has furnished innumerable illustrations of the providential selection of men from obscure localities and unpretentious surroundings for great responsibilities and important fields of influence. Again and again in the history of our country we have had memorable examples of men who have left an undying influence, whose early life was without friends, and whose heritage was devoid of patrimony. In our own locality, Franklin,

Girard, and George W. Childs, the foremost citizens of Philadelphia, were waifs cast upon our streets.

Young Griffith, a flaxen-haired boy in the flush of youth, inexperienced, with the simple, homely memories of a country lad, at twelve years of age turned his back upon the scenes of his childhood never to return. With a trusting heart he set out to make his way in the world and face the temptations, disappointments, and trials incidental to life in a large city. But he was not alone ; the God of the orphan was with him, and the everlasting arm of "the helper of the fatherless " was about him in his boyhood and youth. He has left no journal or letters from which the story of his trials and difficulties may be learned, but in after years those close and dear to him in the most tender ties of earth, the beautiful home life, too sacred for other than the merest reference in these pages, were at no loss to discover the secret of his sympathetic and tender feeling for the orphan and the friendless.

The record of the public and official life of Dr. Griffith, the picture of the man as he was read and known by all men, is the tribute of love and respect of those familiar with the story, and it is deeply interesting and full of inspiring thought.

These witnesses speak of his conversion to faith and trust in the Heavenly Father ; his entry into the ministry and his effective service therein ; his call to the great denominational work to which he gave the best years of his life and the splendid record he has left of his extraordinary ability as a leader. All this is offered, not only as a tribute to the memory of Benjamin Griffith, but as a stimulus to others. It is confidently believed that the example of one who modestly and persistently in the fear of God did such noble service ; who never relinquished a work without leaving it advanced far beyond the point at which it was assumed ; who, in small and great alike, was faithful to the end, is worthy of imitation.

Charles H. Banes.

I.
BOYHOOD.

You hear that boy laughing ?—you think he's all fun ;
But the angels laugh too, at the good he has done ;
The children laugh loud as they troop to his call,
And the poor man that knows him laughs loudest of all.

—*Holmes.*

I.

BOYHOOD.

THE great State of Pennsylvania, with its northwest shore bathed by the blue waters of Lake Erie, and its eastern and southeastern limits defined by the tide-water of the Delaware, is geographically the Keystone State of the Federal Union. This extensive territory was under the original proprietorship of William Penn, "saving or by the king's sovereignty." The liberal scheme of the proprietor was to try the "holy experiment" of a "free colony for all mankind."

Pennsylvania.

The inducement suggested in these high-sounding terms, published it is true not without an element of hope for ultimate success, and aided by the authenticated report of a salubrious climate and the offer of rich lands upon favorable terms, brought thousands of immigrants as settlers. These came from different European States, and were of all forms of religious faith. English Quakers, Moravians, French Huguenots, Irish and Scotch Presbyterians, Welsh, and Irish were all represented.

Many settlers of these nationalities took up land in distinct localities, and thus gave their impress and that of their customs to the section of country they occupied. The Quakers largely located in the neighborhood of Philadelphia, while sections more remote from tide-water were favored by representatives of the non-English speaking races. The local names of many of these settlements suggest the mother tongue of the different nationalities that first broke the soil and erected the log cabins in the wilderness. The enterprise of these frontiersmen manifested itself in the communities which in a few years gathered about their clearings, and through their posterity a potent influence has been exerted upon the State and the nation.

Although fewer in numbers compared with others, the Welshmen were by no means lacking in enterprise or inferior in force, character, and influence. These Welsh settlers in Pennsylvania, as in the other colonies, were noted for their independence and strength of character, causing them to stand forth conspicuously above the general mass. Manifesting their loyalty to truth and independence, they reproduced the spirit that in "wild Wales" led the Cymry people a half-century before Christ to successfully face

the legions of Cæsar when he crossed from Gaul. History furnishes many notable examples of this heroic independence. To one of the sons of Wales, Roger Williams, who landed in 1631, America is indebted for the first practical establishment of non-interference by the State in religious beliefs. In the war of the Revolution there were many Welshmen in the Continental army; not the least distinguished for the loyalty of their support were Elders David Jones and Abel Morgan. The former, known as a fighting chaplain, lies buried in the Great Valley Baptist burying ground, near Valley Forge.

While many of the Welsh immigrants settled in contiguous localities filled up largely by those of their own race, notably in Montgomery, Chester, and Delaware counties, there were others, more hardy and enterprising, who pushed into the interior, and as bold frontiersmen, with strong arms made openings in the forests and cleared the wilderness for cultivation. With faith in the God of their fathers, and in the teachings of the old Welsh Bible of 1678, "gan John Bill, Christopher Barker, Thomas New Comb, ap Henry Hills, printyr," they built their cabins on the broad Susquehanna, or the beautiful Juniata, and thus established their new homes.

Ancestry.

Prominent among these men of the olden time was David Griffith, who in 1756, located a tract in what is now York County. Only one year before this, occurred the memorable disaster of Braddock's defeat by the French and Indians, in the wild lands northwest of this section. The settlements were, in consequence of the turbulence of the Indians, continually liable to hostile incursions and dependent for protection upon the rude stockade forts. The very year in which David Griffith settled in his new home was one to be remembered by the attack and capture of "Fort" Granville, on the Juniata, above Lewistown. Not far removed from this was the wigwam of Logan, Chief of the Cayugas, a friend of the whites, noted for his eloquence, and to be commiserated for the murderous treatment meted out to him in later years by cowardly and brutal men of the race he had befriended. His memorable words after his whole family had been killed by these savages are historical, beginning: "I appeal to any white man to say, if ever he entered Logan's cabin hungry, and he gave him not meat. If ever he came cold and naked, and he clothed him not."

Caleb, the son of David Griffith, married and with his family moved to Juniata county,

in the spring of 1798. He bought about one hundred and sixty acres of hilly and wooded land, three and one-half miles above Thomastown. Here he lived until his death, in the year 1824.

Nathan Griffith (the son of Caleb), was born about 1788, probably in York county. He came to Juniata county, with his father, and married Sarah Leas, of Millerstown.

Nathan built a house on his father's farm, and in early life worked at boat building, on the Juniata River. The



scenery of this locality is as fine as can be imagined. The atmosphere is filled with the ozone that pervades the mountains. The streams in those days abounded with trout, and the forests were full of game. Here Benjamin Griffith, son of Nathan and Sarah, was born October 13, 1821. He received his name probably from his maternal grandfather, Benjamin Leas. At the time of his birth his father,

Nathan, had given up boat building and had become a farmer. His mother died when he was two or three weeks old, and after her death he was placed under the care of his aunt, Elizabeth Griffith. When Benjamin was quite a child, his father married again, his second wife being Margaret Patton. Two sons by this second marriage are living at this date in Kansas.

An Orphan.

Benjamin Griffith, at the age of eleven years and five months, was left an orphan by the death of his father on March 29, 1833. Here began the rough experiences of the fatherless and motherless boy. However tender and gentle the hands of friends and neighbors that care for and protect the parentless child, no earthly friend can be a full substitute for a father or mother. The love of a true mother for her offspring, how fragrant in after years it renders her memory ! Blind often to fault in her child, or if discerning it, always ready to extenuate. Sympathizing with the little sorrows and difficulties of the child, encouraging him in times of disappointment, ever ready to kiss away the tears, and always keenly alive to the happiness of her darling. The impressions of boyhood grow more vivid as the years roll by, and the early life of Benjamin Griffith clearly reveals the secret of his sympathetic feeling for the

orphan, so manifest in the later years of his mature manhood.

On the death of his father, the Court appointed as his guardian a man by the name of Worley, with whom he lived for a year or two in Thomastown. Then he became a member of the family of his uncle, Henry Leas, who kept a country store in Mechanicsburg. Here he went to school, and between times helped in his uncle's store. Practically his life at this period was an unconscious training for the heavy load that was to be borne on his shoulders in after years. He was devoid of the joyous freedom from care, delicious anticipations and hence fragrant memories of the ordinary schoolboy. The spring with its flowers, the summer with its holiday seasons of merry-making, and the cold, white winter with its icy grip on the ponds were alike to him. His life lay between the school and the country store, and the line of demarkation was no doubt indistinct.

After this training for a time, at thirteen years of age, he left the home of his Uncle Leas to make his way in the world on his own account. With a colt furnished by his uncle he left Mechanicsburg to ride all the way to Baltimore. Little is known to others of the motive that led him to turn his back upon the

scenes of his childhood, and part with those who no doubt had in their homely way tried to care for his boyish wants. From his uncle especially he had experienced kindness, manifestations of which followed him as he went out into his larger life. It must have been a



lonely journey; strange thoughts no doubt filled his mind, and anxiety for the future, as he went forth to meet the changes and difficulties of what was to him an unknown world. Yet he was not alone. In

after years, as he taught to others the lesson of one in the olden time, who by faith left his home and his kindred at the command of God and "went out not knowing whither he went," his own experience illustrated the trust in God that inspires the journey and upholds many a traveler until the Divine purpose is fulfilled.

Young Benjamin's first experience in Baltimore was not encouraging. Tired and weary, travel-stained and dazed with the novel and strange sight of a large town, it would be surprising if his heart did not sink within him. In recalling the situation, we are reminded of the narrative of the first entry of another Benjamin, afterward known as Franklin the philosopher, into Philadelphia. As he walked the streets vainly trying to find in the strangers he encountered one familiar face, he experienced no doubt that feeling so akin to despair in every tender and sympathetic person, utter loneliness. It is a strange psychological fact that humanity is more influenced by this depression in a crowded and strange city than when alone in the woods or in the green fields under the blue of heaven. And yet the cause is not difficult to divine. It is the subordination of the particular to the universal, the overshadowing of the individual by the common throng; the loss of individuality. In spite of this unwelcoming attitude of the new community, we know from the after life of Benjamin Griffith that he walked the streets of Baltimore hopeful, self-reliant, and trusting in Him who guides all our movements and presides over human destiny.

In Baltimore.

The important, and to some extent the most

critical period in the life of a boy, is the age when the character is forming, the tastes are being cultivated, and the vocation of life has not yet been decided. Happy the lad who at this important period has the benefit of the advice and counsel of men influenced by the principles of truth, in whose wise guidance he can confide. This good fortune came to our friend. He became a member of the Sunday-school of the First Baptist Church. His engaging and gentle manners, his bright face and manly form, and especially the knowledge of his comparative loneliness, won for him friends among the people with whom he came in contact. And here we see the hand of the Lord guiding the lad thus early in life. Undoubtedly the influence of these new friends, and the circumstances under which the friendships were formed, had much to do with the foundation and development of his Christian character. Some of these memories were fragrant to the latest years of Benjamin Griffith's life.

A Critical
Period.

Soon after his arrival in Baltimore an opening in business was found by which he could utilize some of the experience of his village life. Mr. Brannon, a small dealer, took him into his store as a clerk. After a brief service in this position he was introduced to a Mr. Bowen, a dry goods dealer, and entered his

employ, becoming a member of his family. His stay in this position, however, was not very long. His employer was unsuccessful in business, and in consequence of his failure the young lad was deprived of employment and home, and again left to his slender resources. The next adventure in business, although at first it seemed promising, was more unfortunate than the others. He was engaged by a person named Toy as salesman in a dry goods store. Here he met a thieving clerk, who, being suspected of dishonesty, impudently charged young Griffith with the crime. This resulted in his dishonorable discharge. Afterward the guilty clerk was detected, but too late to relieve the innocent boy from the result of his baseless charge. After leaving Toy, he entered another dry goods store kept by a man named Ridgely. Here he remained until he was nineteen years of age. This was the last situation in mercantile business that fell to his lot.

Being Tested.

There is little data to guide in ascertaining the mental development or the growth in the spiritual life of the lad, and yet we are not without occasional glimpses gathered from those who knew him in his early manhood. Under the preaching of Elder Knapp the evangelist, he was religiously inclined and felt moved to make a public profession of religion.

In point of fact, he was strongly urged by Elder Knapp and others to confess Christ in the ordinance of baptism. He was not only backward and diffident, but keenly conscientious, and hesitated for several months to make this important decision, through a feeling of unworthiness and dread of failure. During the six years he had lived in Baltimore many new acquaintances had been made. The little lad from the mountains of Pennsylvania, at the most sensitive period of his life, had entered a larger circle and lived under new conditions. As he grew in years his character was being formed, his life was changing, and in consequence as he verged on manhood the simple tastes and homely habits of country life no longer controlled him.

Life an Arena.

Life is not only a preparation and a school, but the arena for continual contests and struggles. None can hope to be released from this warfare. Like all the sayings of the great Teacher, these words are immortal and ever exemplified in experience: "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other." If love is the great commandment, the necessary corollary follows, that the great commandment must be carried out for love's sake. This is the

Divine purpose revealed through Christ, and by his life manifested to the world. When the Spirit has brought this conviction to the heart of a man, strength is at the same time given to make decisions that cannot otherwise be made.

His life was chaste and pure, but his love for gayety, and especially dancing, interposed for a time between the church and the world. In the olden time the hymn of William Cowper, "Oh, for a closer walk with God," was a favorite with the churches. Through it the thought of many found expression. They sang:

Cowper.

The dearest idol I have known,
Whate'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only thee.

Perhaps they were too iconoclastic at times. Perhaps it led them sometimes to banish from life what properly used would only brighten it. But however that may be, they made strong saints in those days. Doubtless Benjamin Griffith was impressed by this spirit, and to him was given the power to decide for Christ and his service. He found something better than any proffer the world could make. He chose the good part that would become more worthful as it was used. He made a public profession of faith in his Redeemer, and followed his example. In November, 1839,

he was baptized by Rev. Stephen P. Hill, D. D., Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Baltimore. He thus entered the Christian life and a new service, under One who is able to keep until the end, and whose promises never fail. In the chapters to come we shall see whither this service led.

Charles H. Banes.

II.

THE STUDENT PERIOD.

One thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.—*New Testament* (R. V.)

II.

THE STUDENT PERIOD.

A NEW life now opened. In 1840, Benjamin Griffith entered Madison (now Colgate) University. Then began the formative period of his life-character. The story has a fascinating interest. In the sketch of its progress, search will be made for the earliest developments of that power that is still a mystery. If it shall appear that the secret is within easy reach of the many, the greater will be the joy. There were traits of character in him that, with all the fruition of fifty years between, stand out in vivid remembrance, but which, like the grace of love, outranking the most brilliant gifts of early Christianity, may be a common heritage.

From the first, one was prepossessed in his favor by his unaffected modesty, his sincerity, and the urbanity of his manners. It was natural for him to be courteous and gentlemanly toward everybody. His fealty to Christ, the singleness and steadiness of his purpose, and the pure atmosphere that he

A Retrospect.

breathed, were all conspicuous. He was always cheerful, never frivolous; one with his brethren, never forgetful of his high calling; persuasive in address, and remarkably self-possessed, with firm convictions of his own, but unobtrusive. To meet him and walk with him was like getting on the shaded side of the street on a hot summer day. It was hardly possible that he should fail to win his way to the confidence and esteem of any whom he might meet. These all stand out fresh in memory, as if but months instead of many years had intervened.

But these did not make him the power he was. Nor was it scholarship, genius, brilliancy, fervor of imagination, grasp of intellect, stubborn persistence, fertility of invention, the magic of oratory or leadership; but what he had, and all he had wondrously combined, was subordinated to one thing, his persistent pressing "toward the mark for the prize of the heavenly calling of God in Christ Jesus."

In the early part of his college life he became superintendent of a Sunday-school. It was "a little cloud out of the sea like a man's hand." The prophet's servant had looked again and again, and all he could discover was this speck on the sky. It was the prophet who saw in it the coming of God with power.

As one among a hundred young men studying for the ministry, he was seeking the best possible furnishing for his life-work. But as he looked out from his window on the hill his spirit was stirred within him. He seemed to say to himself: "What am I doing for a world in tears? I am receiving, all the while receiving, but what am I giving?" Absolutely nothing. Could it be that there were none for whom, with such preparation as he had, he might reach out his hand? It was as if he had heard the voice of his foot-worn Master, and had seen his eager gaze at the coming groups: "Say not ye there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold I say unto you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields that they are white already to harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." He looked. Fields whitened before him.

At a distance of two miles he found an unoccupied field, gathered the children, organized a Sunday-school, became about everything for it—superintendent, teacher, and burden-bearer. This open door for doing good introduced him to a field as wide as the race. Unconsciously, perhaps, he thus entered upon his life-work.

This school did not become a center of attraction, nor did his example fire the hearts

Exceptional
Devotion.

of other students. He began and carried on the enterprise so quietly that neither faculty nor students would have known of its existence if they had not noted the regularity of his foot-journeys on Lord's Day afternoons. It was out of line with current methods, and was a pretty stern tax upon the time and strength of a student. Besides, it was at too distant a range for the ministry. Some of the more advanced students especially inflamed with zeal, had various appointments for preaching. In fact, the very air on that hill was freighted with memories and associations and immediate influences stimulating to self-consecration in the highest degree. The Eastern and Western Associations, with their monthly public meetings and soul-stirring reports, developed a burning missionary spirit. This pervading sentiment made students anxious for gospel service, either in the desolate places of our own land or in the heathen countries of the East.

This little obscure country school, back among the hills, never attained the dignity of a report or notice. Nor could any one have been as much surprised as he had this been suggested. It was nothing more than "a little cloud like a man's hand." This lack of encouragement did not dishearten him. On the contrary, enthusiasm grew with each week. He had

found a wide open door for doing good. His head and hands and heart were dedicated to the service, and all his powers were tasked to care for the work before him. In an unexpected manner there was revealed to the writer the story that he intended to tell only to the Heavenly Father.

Our rooms were so connected that a moderately low voice in one could be heard in the other. Benjamin Griffith never knew that any human ear heard his pleadings there for that school. His purpose was to have the door shut, and to be alone with God. I presume that he began prayer to himself; but at times he became so absorbed that, in forgetfulness of everything else, he found it spontaneous and a relief to pray audibly (always in an undertone), answering to the importunity in prayer that is expressed when the psalmist says: "I cried unto the Lord with my voice; with my voice unto the Lord did I make my supplication. I cried unto Thee, O Lord. I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living. Attend unto my cry; for I am brought very low." I suppose that voice was the outcry of one in tears. It was certainly that with my dear friend. I heard him when it seemed as if he would not let the Lord go without a conscious answer; and with suppressed

A Sacred Episode.

sobbing he literally cried unto the Lord. His importunity was not for himself in "a winter of despair"; it was for that school; and not in discouragement, but in joyous expectancy, and from a wealth of affection. As it lies in my mind, those seasons of prayer were impressively prolonged.

I too had been a Sunday-school teacher. A sad distance stretched between us. That in-born enlistment, that anointing of the Spirit, that soul-burden for the perishing, that overflowing affection, that likeness to Him who wept over Jerusalem, and who spent nights in prayer, that urgency born of assured acceptance in the prayer, like Elijah's prayer for rain, can never be effaced.

An Ineffaceable
Impression.

Whether, except by faith, he ever saw the children of his school gathered to Christ, I never knew; but it was clear that the joy of laboring for it, the profound satisfaction and conscious reward, made his cup full and overflowing. All this, as we now know, was an indication of the rapid formation of his character and plans for life-work.

No outline of the achievements of that life belongs to this chapter. But those familiar with the history know that the little cloud of promise has fulfilled its mission, pouring out its blessings and causing many to rejoice.

Two notable characteristics became well defined in his student life.

First, an unpretentious, unstudied, inborn, ever-present, and unsatisfied desire to do good for the sake of doing it. That is something that is nearer than twin sister to a living faith. "Show me thy faith apart from thy works, and I by my works will show thee my faith." These united, in hearts where Christ has been enthroned, have called out the grandest lives that have ever been lived. This is the personal ennoblement which the Lord seeks in his people. "Created in Christ Jesus for good works." "According to the image of him who created him." The goodness of God translated into human hearts, and nourished there by the Creator Spirit, develops a passion for doing good that takes control of the human soul. "Trust in the Lord and do good." That heavenly counsel wrought by a new creation, and the new man strengthened with might by the Holy Spirit, is the secret of a noble life. For personal and endless favor with God, there will be the instant, joyous acceptance of Christ as absolutely all; following hard after, the constraining love of Christ *impelling* to every good word and work; for incoming strength, omnipotence; for guidance, supreme wisdom;

life surrendered to God and consecrated to doing good.

Heroes of Faith.

The results of such a life may be indefinitely multiplied with the ease of grateful breathing. The one who through Divine grace leads this life may be classed with the heroes of the Old Testament, "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, and obtained promises." It makes him the yoke-fellow of that man who from the day he surrendered to Christ never cast a backward glance, lived a life of faith upon the Son of God, stood peerless among apostles, and who in closing his life-work shouted: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith." Yes, and that would be character and life patterned with marvelous exactness after that of the faultless Man of Nazareth.

What emblazoned caption shall be put over such a life? Something impassioned and exhaustive? No. The Holy Spirit lifts it to a solitary height when he writes: "Who went about doing good." In the work of creation, the Son of God "spake, and it was done." Thus I am led to believe that the first great secret of Dr. Griffith's outreaching and honored life was a self-forgetful, loving impulse to do good, cherished until it became a passion.

Conjoined with this was the early recognition of the place given to children in the methods of redeeming love. From the beginning he gave to children the place they hold in the Divine counsels. Jesus must have greatly rejoiced when that mystery was revealed to him.

A half-century has brought such changes in the outward attitude of Christians toward the children, that only one here and there can put himself back where young Griffith stood. Even foreign missions had the intelligent support of thousands where the Sunday-school had the same support of hundreds. Many of the most influential members of the churches were not beyond a lurking suspicion that Sunday-schools were an innovation tending to weakness and effeminacy in the faith. Fifteen years was an early age for admission to church-membership. As for the International system, the grading of schools, weekly expositions of current lessons in scores of religious, and even secular papers, besides the enormous output of publishing houses, Christian literature for the young flooding the churches, teachers by hundreds of thousands and pupils by the million, all this belongs to a late date in that line of achievements by Benjamin Griffith and his compeers. He was not a whit behind any of

A Backward
Look.

the specially honored forerunners of what we see to-day. In his practical interpretation of the Great Commission he was fifty years in advance of his time. It was no strain for him to see that the charge to preach the good news to every creature necessarily included the children at home; yes, and to see, with jealous solicitude, that those who are in the artless simplicity of early childhood, not yet entrenched behind superstructures of growing prejudice and falsehood, which many a desolating affliction might not subsequently tear away, their tender hearts not yet chilled by deception, and skilled in arts of deceit and treachery, that these least of all should be excepted from that charge.

Beginning with his student days, his life shows that he saw in this work the first open channel for the outflowing of sanctified affection and pre-eminently the open door to our race. With quickened ears he heard the voice, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not." In that interference on the part of Christ's chosen apostles, rudely rebuking the spontaneous promptings of affection and faith, and shaking merited and unsuspecting confidence in the little ones, he saw a form of unbelief exceedingly displeasing to his Lord, which had struggled for

mastery for eighteen hundred years. He caught the spirit of that prophecy, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies; that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger." See what runs before and follows that prediction. Interlocked with what to human eyes seems grandest, what could it mean but that the most resplendent of the works of God were yet to be eclipsed by what he should do with little children? This was the Scripture with which Jesus confounded the chief priests and scribes when they remonstrated against his allowing the children to sing his praises in the temple.

In such connections as these, how easily fall into line those words that run counter to all human forecastings: "The foolish things of the world God chose that he might put to shame the things which are strong"; as also the significant lesson: "And calling a little child to him, he placed it in the midst of them and said: Verily I say to you, if ye do not turn and become as the little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." In due time came the satisfactory response: "In that very hour he greatly

A Divine Principle.

rejoiced in the Holy Spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and discerning and reveal them unto babes ; yea, O Father, that so it was well-pleasing in thy sight." The divinely planned adaptation of the mystery of redeeming love to the human understanding at its earliest dawn filled the heart of the Saviour to overflowing.

Benjamin Griffith saw enough to share his Master's joy. He saw the cloud that was full of rain. "The hearts of the fathers turned to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers." Newer impulses and richer conceptions of the Divine love took possession of his soul, leading to greater consecration for the service of Christ, and especially in hopefulness for the early conversion of the little ones of the household. As his experience ripened it was with love for the young, and with firm faith in the doctrine that the simplicity of Christ's teaching is divinely adapted to the simplicity of childhood.

A Broad Arena

After six years of study and earnest preparation for the beginning of his life-work, he was graduated from Madison University, in 1846. He held an honorable position in his class, and was respected by all its members. His career had not been marked by any brilliancy of ac-

quirement or influence. But he was conscientious and industrious. Tasks undertaken were mastered. This was prophetic of the future, when by his determination he overcame much that would have daunted one less resolute. Immediately upon his graduation there came to him that important question, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? The answer did not tarry long. His life as a college student was to be exchanged for the broad arena and the activities of a Christian service for humanity. The unknown future lay before him with its conflicts and duties, its successes and failures. What shall the harvest be? What of the outreaching influence for good upon those to whom he may be called to minister or serve? He was well equipped as a student and scholar, and as we have said, the equal of his associates.

But of far more importance than this educational foundation was the inward training and preparation of the Spirit. The former is of value, but the latter is vital. The former may be omitted, the latter never. The former is man's acquirement, the latter is God's endowment. Without this his life-work would have been a failure. Divinely favored with consecration to the Master's service, the result though it

may be for a time deferred must inevitably receive the promised blessing.

Benjamin Griffith entered upon the activities of life with an inborn lovingly cherished impulse to do good, divinely given, divinely sustained, divinely guided, and divinely crowned.

JOHN W. SARLES.

III.

ACTIVE WORK IN THE MINISTRY.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.—*Old Testament.*

I am ready to preach the gospel to you also that are in Rome.
—*Paul.*

Not alone to know, but to act according to thy knowledge is thy destination, proclaims the voice of my inmost soul. Not for indolent contemplation and study of thyself, nor for brooding over emotions of piety—no, for action was existence given thee; thy actions, and thy actions alone, determine thy worth.—*Fichte.*

III.

ACTIVE WORK IN THE MINISTRY.

ACTIVITY is the manifestation of a universal law. No concourse of atoms, no galaxy of stars exists beyond its pale of operations. The same law holds true in regard to minds, no two of which are quiescently related; consciously, or unconsciously, each will act and react upon the other. The stronger mind may control the weaker, but it is the contact of the weaker with the stronger which sets its energies in motion. Souls are not constituted to move along unaffected and independent lines.

The same condition of things obtains in the highest of all realms—the spiritual. No regenerate soul is motionless within itself, neither indeed can be; ever onward, ever upward, is the irreversible law of its being. And whenever two or more such souls are drawn together, their religious activities will be quickened by all those necessities which their mutual relations impose. If these activities are hindered, disaster is sure to follow.

But can these activities be hindered? In the physical world and in the spiritual, everywhere, will is back of force ; but there is this difference between the operations of will in the former and in the latter : In the physical world matter is always passive under the will of God, while the activities of the spiritual realm are always co-operative with that will. If therefore, through any cause, man does not choose to act as God would have him act, he hampers those activities which God would have him use. Blessed, therefore, is that man who lovingly wills to surrender his will to God that God may work through him as unrestrictedly as he works in nature. With this surrender God gives the intellect freer play and larger scope to devise great things for him, and to the activities more unerring directness and greater power for their achievement. Here then is the secret of a successful Christian life—a cheerful surrender of the will, and sometimes of the understanding until further enlightened by faith, to God. Here is the point where faith achieves her first great victory and crowns the believer with laurels that will never fade. Of all this the subject of this volume was a conspicuous illustration, and all the more because his surrender meant a life-long consecration to the service of Almighty God.

This surrender of the will to God is of universal obligation. Without it no man can "enter into life" ; but to surrender one's self to the work of the gospel ministry requires a special call, the primary element of which amounts to a Divine command—the Holy Spirit, by his still, small voice, laying the burden of this duty on the heart of his chosen ambassador so that he is forced to exclaim : Woe is me if I preach not the gospel. The true minister of Christ is therefore "called" into the service of his Lord. But there is also a second element of this call correlative to the first : it is providential interposition. In brief, the Spirit of God, intending to lead a man into this ministry, so adjusts his outward circumstances to the convictions he has inspired that that result may be attained. The inspiration and the correlation are of one. The general recognition by the church of a man's natural and spiritual fitness to teach, the pressing on him of that duty, or at least his prayerful consideration of it, the disturbance of his most cherished plans of life, and unexpected opportunities of preparing for this work, are the most usual forms which this interposition assumes. That Benjamin Griffith's mind was clearly penetrated with this sort of call to the ministerial work, and that his outward

Surrender of
Will.

circumstances were adjusted to this conviction, there is no room for doubt.

Endowed with superior talents, cultivated by manifold discipline, bound by no earthly ties to interfere with his movements, indued with a just, and therefore laudable ambition, what course does he adopt? Had it not been

most unusual this question need not have been proposed.



Dr. Griffith in 1851.

A call to the gospel ministry is, as we have said, a single act of the Holy Spirit terminating as soon as heard and responded to; but the "calling" of the Christian minister is quite another

thing. The physician's, or the lawyer's calling is his "profession," and that of the handicraftsman is his "occupation"; but the "calling" of the minister is neither a profession nor an occupation; he never stipulates to render so much service for so much pay. His calling is his "vocation," and his principal function is to do or suffer the will of his Master. Other men may come or go, as interest seems to prompt them, but the Christian pastor—never. He cannot say what may be the will

of God respecting him in any week to come. His truest wisdom, therefore, is to dismiss all anxious care about the future, and consign his ways unto the Lord, knowing well that he who called him to his work will direct his steps. The "calling," therefore, of the Christian ministry is perpetual, heavenly directing, both as to fields of labor and to divinely appointed duties. The apprehension of all this would greatly lighten a burden which often presses heavily on the over-anxious pastor's heart.

And now we can appreciate the wisdom of Mr. Griffith's course at the very outset of his ministerial life. Before this he had prayed, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And God had evidently told him what to do, and had assisted him thus far in its performance. And now that he stood face to face with a necessitous world, what better could he do than wing another prayer of faith to God: Lord, whither wouldst thou have me go? This must have been his method; there is no other explanation of his course. In answer to this prayer, there grew up in him the conviction that Cumberland City needed to be occupied for Christ. Then came the divine interposition which confirmed this feeling—the Executive Board of the Maryland Baptist Union Association appointing him, at a salary

Beginning Work.

of four hundred dollars per year, missionary pastor of that locality, for as yet no Baptist church had existed there. So on June 1, 1847, he began his work on that long neglected field. In the following month, July 22, he organized a Baptist church of six members, and on November 1, 1848, put it in possession of a church property valued at "nearly as many thousand dollars as there were constituent members of the church." But this required a "deal of begging," and the necessary absence of the pastor on this account greatly interrupted his spiritual work. Few in our times have wrought with greater persistence in the face of obstacles than Benjamin Griffith did for the attainment of this result. A report to the Missionary Committee of the Association, in 1849, contains these words: "Brother Griffith, on returning from a very successful collecting tour, with money sufficient to pay for the house, furniture, etc., was met with the mortifying information that the contractor had absconded, defrauding the church of one thousand three hundred dollars of the money that had been previously paid. His securities refused to make up the loss, and Brother Griffith was again compelled to solicit aid." His own last words to the committee, after the resignation of this pulpit, November 5, 1851, were :

“Four years ago, and the mass of this community knew as little of Baptists as they did of Mormons. . . We are known and respected, though not very tenderly loved by some. . . In a word, a foundation has been laid for a most glorious structure.” During this pastorate, Mr. Griffith organized a church of seventeen members at Eckhart Mines, an out-station ten miles from Cumberland, which is yet, we believe, annually represented in its Association.

Obstacles.

For many years the New Market Street Baptist Church had been one of the strongest churches in the old Philadelphia Association ; but at the time of which we write, it had fallen to its lowest point. A former popular pastor had resigned, and had taken with him a large number of its members ; his successor also had resigned after a few months' trial of the field. On the earnest recommendation of the Rev. William Shadrach, D. D., a former pastor, in whom the greatest confidence was reposed, the church extended a unanimous call to the Rev. Benjamin Griffith, of Maryland, at a salary of eight hundred dollars per annum. He accepted, and on April 6, 1851, preached his introductory sermon to a large and appreciative congregation. His text was : “For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (1

A New Field.

Cor 2 : 2) ; and this was the actual keynote of his whole public ministry. Those of us who were present on that occasion vividly remember the preacher's sermon and appearance. A youngish-looking man—he was in his thirtieth year—of medium height and rather slim, with frank, open features bronzed



New Market Street Baptist Church.

by exposure to the sun ; quiet of demeanor and graceful in movement, with a sweet, clear, penetrating voice, enunciating every word distinctly. With the sermon and the man the church and

congregation were alike encouraged and delighted.

What, on the other hand, were the feelings of the pastor on that occasion, it were difficult to determine. Save that he had a large and sympathetic audience and a devoted band of deacons—of whom deacon Charles T. Davis alone survives—to support him, there was

nothing, absolutely nothing, of an earthly sort to beget enthusiasm. A more cheerless, gloomy, and unattractive meeting-house than his no city church then occupied ; no trace of decoration, outside nor inside, was anywhere discernible, nor indeed, architecturally possible. And, to crown it all, there was a heavy debt remaining on the property. This may seem strange, considering what the church had been. But so it was. Mean in appearance, however, as the old house was, the glory of the Lord had often filled the place ; rivers of peace had again and again flowed from its portals ; and mountain waves of holy joy had often broken their crests within its walls ; while many a child of God, as he went forth from that glory bath, has blessed the Lord that his feet were ever directed thither. Surely it was not the house which sanctified the church, but it was the Spirit of the Lord shining through the church which glorified the house and made every stick of its rude timbers sacred with ineffaceable associations. But to Benjamin Griffith, these things were historical items which had had their day.

As to the church itself : organically shaken, weakened by the desertion of many, spiritually discouraged and apathetic, there was little enough in it to cheer the new pastor's heart.

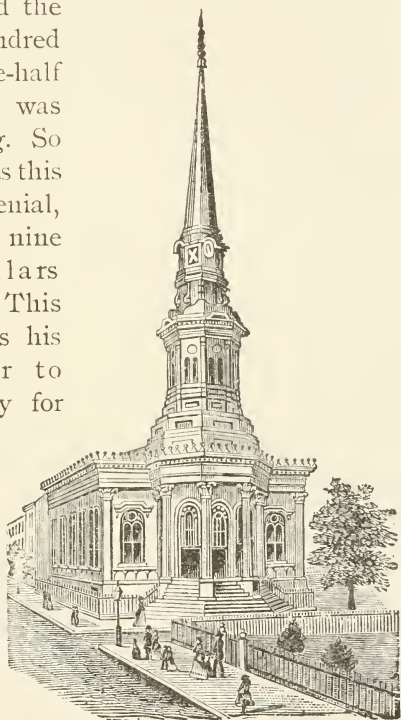
Nevertheless, he had the Archimedean standing place whence he could move the church and lift it up. But it was very evident that he had not left all the labors and perplexities of the pastorate at Cumberland.

Preaching and
Pruning.

This state of things, however, did not long continue. From the very first the church felt the stimulating influence of his preaching and example; the work of pruning began, and fifty-six dead branches were cut off; then confidence revived, expectations were awakened, and a deeper religious tone prevailed. In a word, the church in a remarkably short space of time was no longer the broken, spiritless body which he found it, but a prayerful, reunited people, striving to do the will of the Master.

But Mr. Griffith's ambition for the church did not stop here; he saw the inevitable necessity of a better location and a more commodious house of worship. It would require too much space to detail the various stages—demanding the clearest judgment and the nicest skill of leadership—through which this enterprise passed from its conception to its realization; but there is one fact among them too significant for omission. At an informal meeting, held at the residence of one of the brethren, Mr. R. H. Morgan, the pastor resolved to get down to practical work. In a few brief

sentences he laid his financial plans before the brethren, and then proposed to open a subscription list right there, himself claiming the honor to head the list for five hundred dollars—one-half the salary he was then receiving. So contagious was this act of self-denial, that about nine thousand dollars was secured. This illustrates his great power to obtain money for noble projects; but that gift could not have been so efficient as it was had it not been vitalized by his self-forgetful spirit. As a result of their arduous and self-sacrificing labors, the church—now the Fourth Baptist Church of Philadelphia—entered its elegant and popular

*Fourth Baptist Church, 1854.*

house of worship at the northwest corner of Fifth Street and Buttonwood, on the first Sunday of September, 1854. Considering the condition of this church when Mr. Griffith accepted its pastorate, and the brief time which had elapsed since his coming, its progress must be regarded as phenomenal.

There is, perhaps, no man living who stands more in need of the comfort and support which a congenial home affords than the Christian pastor. It multiplies his opportunities; extends his influence; and increases his power for good. All these blessings of a genial home-life Mr. Griffith was affluently to experience. On October 17, 1854, he married Miss Elizabeth C., daughter of Mr. John P. Crozer, of Upland, Pa., a man of blessed memory in the churches, and whose richest legacy to his descendants is his noble Christian character. In Mrs. Griffith, her husband found one whom the wise man of the Proverbs has described—one whose value is beyond all price.

But God does not call his ministers to "seats of ease," nor yet to the enjoyment of undisturbed comforts. Their duties are of such a nature and their environment is so peculiar that such a call in this life is impossible. Nay, it often happens that the more faithful they are to their divine vocation, the bitterer

will be the cup which they are called upon to drain. Had it been otherwise, the name of many a noble man of God, enshrined in the hearts of millions of his race, would never have been heard beyond his parish boundaries. Had Rev. Benjamin Griffith been an exception to this general rule, he too would have passed away unknown to the many thousands to whom his name is as a household word. The great prosperity of his church and the deep affection with which it regarded him would have bound him to that pastorate for many years to come, if not for life. But such was not to be. Let us mark the hand of God in this. •

In every church, conducted on sound principles, there are a few polyphagous members whom no gospel preacher can supply. They are ever restive, ever seeking after novelties. Such was the case at this time in the Fourth Church. No sooner did the pastor discover this fact, though besought by many of his brethren and all his deacons to disregard it, than he resolved to quit that field. Though he could not see it then, it is as clear as noonday now, that that was precisely what God required of him. He had another call to send him which would practically give him the pastorate of many churches. Who of us does not compre-

Leadings.

hend that that trifling, though irritating, mutiny gave to our denomination one of the ablest and most successful executive officers that any great religious society ever had? On May 31, 1857, Mr. Griffith again preached from 1 Cor. 2 : 2, but it was the closing sermon of, if we estimate it by results, his brilliant six years' pastorate; after which he immediately entered upon the greatest and most far-reaching work of his life.

The Sunday-school work Mr. Griffith regarded as of vital importance, and there was no other field of labor on which he expended more time and thought. Possessed as he was with the spirit of youth, for he was a man who never grew old, the children who came within the range of his influence always found in him a sympathetic friend and helper. To labor for them was not a duty only, but a pleasure. So pronouncedly a self-remunerative work did he esteem it, that he could not imagine how any further recognition of his labors here could be required. Accordingly, when at a Sunday-school anniversary held in the church just after his resignation, a silver pitcher was presented to him, bearing the inscription, "To Rev. Benjamin Griffith, from the teachers and officers of the Fourth Baptist Church. A token of their esteem. Philadelphia, June 16,

1857," he regarded this loving act with unfeigned surprise, so little did he think of the estimation in which he was held. Under his watchful, tender care, his Sunday-schools not only prospered, but most of their scholars were led to Christ. Mrs. Griffith also took an active part in his Sunday-school work ; and, indeed, her ministry during her membership was a constant benison to the church.

Although the ministers of Christ are all baptized into the one and self-same Spirit, yet they are not all cast in the same natural mold. Probably no two of them are alike. Each has his own peculiar temperament, talents, predilections, and methods. It is thus that God has provided for the varied necessities and exigencies of his churches ; and there can be no doubt that it is according to this law of adaptation that he distributes his pastors among them. It is only as we keep this fact in view that we can understand anything at all of the mysteries of his ministerial dispensations. This principle is clearly enough apparent in regard to the life of Dr. Griffith, who from first to last seems to have been directed in every important step he took. And this fact is of great practical value, because it demonstrates to us that God does not overlook nor forget us in our individual lives. Now, in every position which

Differing Mold

A Characteriza-
tion.

Dr. Griffith was called upon to fill, he strongly, because naturally, maintained his individuality, and in so doing exhibited characteristics which every one acquainted with him will instinctively recognize. He was possessed of dignity, without repellence; geniality, without familiarity; keenness of insight, without obtrusiveness; clearness of forecast, without presumption; comprehensiveness of apprehension, without unchangeability; concentration of purpose, without bondage; inflexibility, without stubbornness; and strong convictions, without harshness. But, above all, Dr. Griffith was a man of faith, and his faith was not merely an operation of the understanding—it was the moral exercise of the will. And he was a man of *prayer*. Such were some of the traits which Dr. Griffith manifested in the working out of God's plan in him, day by day and year by year. It is easier by far to die for Christ than thus to live for him.

As a preacher, Mr. Griffith was evangelical, didactic, logical. It may be doubted whether he ever preached a sermon that did not have to do with Christ. His favorite themes were such as grew out of the love of Christ, the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God, and the infinite willingness of the Holy Spirit to grant his aid to the helpless.

In his pastoral work, Mr. Griffith was as thorough and methodical as in his preparations for the pulpit. To economize time and strength, he "districted" his field,—and this was necessary, for transportation through our city was not so perfect then as now,—and visited each member of his flock as often as he could, bestowing especial attention on those who needed it most. But the objects of his tenderest care were the young of his flock ; in sickness, he was at their bedsides ; in health, they were with him at the mercy seat.

But there was one duty in regard to which he was exacting, and that was in accepting candidates for baptism. He was a firm, even enthusiastic, believer in early conversion ; but whether the applicant for the ordinance was young or old, he insisted on knowing, as well as man could know, whether or not the "root of the matter" was in him. This he regarded as of vital importance to the candidate himself and to the church. Had he adopted that freer method which now too generally obtains, the total of his baptisms would have been materially increased. As it was, it is a goodly number.

Thus did Benjamin Griffith respond to the Divine call ; thus did he accept and discharge the manifold duties of his vocation ; and thus

did he meet its varied responsibilities with their cares and perplexities. Seeking not his own, but his Master's honor, God has honored him as few other men of this generation have been honored; honored by the love and gratitude of tens of thousands of his brethren; honored by the magnificent work he was enabled to accomplish; and now, honored with that heavenly glory, compared with which the honors of all earthly empires darken into shame.

Two Brothers.

During the last revival season,—1851,—in the old house, Mr. Griffith baptized two brothers, one of whom felt constrained to give himself to the work of the gospel ministry. He it is who writes these lines. His one great sorrow is, the occasion which renders such lines possible. One consolation, nevertheless, remains. While Benjamin Griffith was here, and at his best, he was enshrouded as in a luminous or, if you prefer it, heavenly mist; but there he forever abides in the clear shining of him who is the Light of all light, the Joy of all joy, and the Love of all love.

T. P. COULSTON.

IV.

THE PUBLICATION SOCIETY.

The thoroughly great men are those who have done everything thoroughly and have never despised anything, however small, of God's making.—*Ruskin*.

IV.

THE PUBLICATION SOCIETY.

I. PROVIDENTIAL LEADINGS.

THE golden threads of the All Father's wise and loving providence are woven into the warp and woof of every godly life. Though the fullness and beauty of the divine pattern is unseen and unknown to the worker because, like the tapestry weaver, he perceives only its under side, and though he occasionally may make mistakes and introduce unworthy material, the shuttle will be so guided that the pattern is preserved intact and the blemishes are softened. At the last the Master's "Well Done" will be in genuine recognition of best endeavor however humble, and of attainments worthily gained, as really as if the plan had been worked out by power inherent to the individual.

But broad divine patterns are not limited to individual lives, nor are they formed by mere dashes of varying color on a neutral ground. He who sees the end from the beginning, and knows perfectly each step in progress, will so relate individuals and organizations and com-

Divine Patterns.

munities that each will blend with the other to complete his purpose. When the pattern comes to be viewed upon its upper side, the several portions that have gone forward separately in their preparation are found to have been in fact but parts of a symmetrical whole, and fitly joined together. And while it is true that the God-given pattern has been worked out by the individual, it is equally true that the pattern and the work have made abiding impress upon the individual.

From our present point of view, the providential leadings in the relation of Benjamin Griffith to the American Baptist Publication Society are clear as the sunlight. It is equally clear that the work and the man were being brought together for a purpose, and that God had his servant in training for the hour when the burden of responsibility should be laid upon him.

At the annual meeting of the Society held in 1852, he was elected a member of the Board of Managers, being at that time pastor of the New Market Street Baptist Church, Philadelphia. During the summer of that year the acquaintance began that culminated two years later in his marriage to a daughter of Mr. John P. Crozer, a vice-president of the Society. Meanwhile he began to prove his capacity as

an active member of the Publication Committee, keeping his church at the same time in touch with the Society, as is evident by generous contributions while engaged in erecting a new house of worship.

Fidelity to duty was a marked characteristic of this man. How thoroughly he entered into what was committed to him may be learned from a letter written to his wife during that period: "I went to the rooms and remained in committee meeting till half-past six o'clock. This kind of work is very taxing, not simply on time, but on mind and body. I came home completely jaded. And now what do you think I have been doing to-day? Reading a miserable novel sent to the Society for a Sunday-school book. Of its interest as a story you can judge when your staid husband tells you that he commenced at eleven o'clock and read on for nearly an hour after his dinner hour, not ever supposing it could be near one o'clock. It is a story about love, religion, marriage, spiritualists, Mormons, elopement, insanity, deaths natural and by accident, and so on. It is a fair novel, but any woman having assurance enough to send it to our Society and make two of us ministers read it, ought to be excommunicated."

Fidelity to Duty.

From the very beginning of his membership

Growing Useful-
ness.

in the Board, his capacity for leadership was shown in the wisdom of his practical suggestions and in his eminent executive ability. He early advocated and carried through a resolution declaring it to be within the province of the Board to recommend suitable persons to the nominating committee, at the annual meeting for officers of the Society. In 1853, he was appointed one of a committee of five to select a person for corresponding secretary, as it was expected that the office would be vacated at the close of the year. The qualifications named were "education, business capacity, and piety." At the same meeting he was named as one of a committee "to designate the duties of the secretaries," the relations between the departments being at that time very far from satisfactory. In fact, there were positive disagreements constantly arising from a lack of distinct headship in some one person who possessed both the capacity and the nerve to manage the Society's growing interests. The subject was almost constantly before the Executive Committee, and it required several years to become definitely settled.

In 1854, we find him chairman of a committee on "Nominations"; and member of committees on "Appointment of Colporters," and "Church Libraries." Upon his motion, after

much discussion, prices were agreed upon for a Sunday-school hymn book to be issued by the Society ; these prices were a compromise, and showed wise discrimination and correct judgment, such as would scarcely be expected of one without special business training.

In his report of the committee upon the "Publishing Fund," made to the anniversary meeting in 1854, are sentences that demonstrate his broad views, and which were prophetic : "Next to a preached gospel, a pure and evangelical literature is the hope and safety of our country. The publication of such literature is the great work of this Society. A work most nobly commenced, but only commenced ; so far from having fully entered upon it, we have not as yet conceived the magnitude of the work which God has assigned us. To prosecute it with vigor, and on the scale required to meet the demands made upon us by the opening providences of God, a very large increase of our working capital is requisite."

Prophetic
Sentences.

The following year showed still greater activity on his part, and yet more marked recognition of his ability. Things were not moving smoothly with the officials ; their relations with each other were not yet sufficiently defined ; responsibilities were either assumed or declined in a manner to disturb

harmony and hinder progress ; plan after plan had failed, and radical changes were essential. Had he not been regarded as a leader who was gifted with sound discretion, there would not have been given him the chairmanship of a committee to prepare certain necessary amendments to the by-laws to meet the case. Later, in the same line, he was appointed one of a committee for "Reconstruction of the duties of officials" ; and this work was accomplished with promptness and thoroughness, as is shown in the records of the Board.

Reconstruction.

The only periodical issue of the Society at that time was "The Baptist Record," which proclaimed to the world what was being done, and formed the principal medium of appeal to the denomination. During this year we find him making earnest pleas for a new and better paper, by means of which the colporter and Sunday-school work could be set forth as they deserved to be.

The year 1856 was one of increased activity and usefulness on his part. The New England Sunday-school Union was in that year merged into the Publication Society ; there were months of prolonged correspondence and negotiation, with occasional possibilities of failure to attain the desired result ; but the final outcome was satisfactory to all concerned. Many

of the details of this important transaction evidently fell to his share.

The question of publishing a monthly paper or magazine again came up, and he was appointed chairman of a committee to consider the subject ; also one of a committee to select an editor and to decide upon the style and scope of "The Young Reaper," which formed part of the assets of the New England Sunday-school Union.

He was chairman of a committee on agents and employees in the depository ; a member of a committee to revise the anniversary minutes and prepare them for publication ; and also one of a committee "to prepare a suitable testimonial on the resignation of the corresponding secretary, William Shadrach, D. D." His name appears as author of several important resolutions, proving that every department of the work of the Board came under his notice and awakened his interest ; and during the fiscal year he was present at twenty-one of its twenty-five meetings.

Varied Work.

A single mention of these busy days, from a letter dated June 29, 1856, is pertinent, as showing his deep sense of personal responsibility : "This committee on depository agent and help, which has had so many meetings, will have another meeting on Monday, nine o'clock,

probably all day. The business is very important ; I ought to be there. I have just finished reading the MS. 'Ella and her Grandfather.' As re-written, it is improved some, but it is very childish still. This completes the list, three this week. I expect another one shortly."

Preparation.

Whether or not he was conscious of the fact, he was certainly being prepared by intelligent and devoted service for the important position that was waiting to be filled, and for which no other person known to the Board had seemed available or properly qualified. Mr. John P. Crozer's name now appears for the first time as chairman of a committee to select a corresponding secretary.

And now another factor appeared : the young pastor became afflicted with an ailment of the vocal organs that seriously interfered with his public duties, and his physician declared that he must cease preaching. But it was not his intention to give up the ministry ; he believed that the pastorate was his legitimate sphere. Meanwhile, Mr. Crozer had discovered the possibilities in his son-in-law, and privately urged him to consider the secretaryship. For months it was under advisement and then was put aside, as he thought, finally. Again it was strongly urged, Mrs. Griffith now using

her influence to induce his acceptance of the position.

Added to all was a personal appeal from a committee of the Board that had been informally appointed to confer with him. All felt that it was a critical period in the history of the Society, and they believed that in him were to be found the requisite qualities that would bring relief and success. Their first approach was a surprise, but an agreement followed to allow his name to be presented for the office of secretary.

The Society's fiscal year, 1857, opened amid gloom and disaster in the business world, the effects of which were keenly felt. Added to this were peculiar difficulties: the depository agent, the treasurer, and some members of the Board, from one cause or another, had resigned; the business department was embarrassed by advances made for missionary work; and liabilities had been increased by purchase of the assets of the New England Sunday-school Union. Added to all this was the threatening cloud of civil war. One might well hesitate to assume a heavy burden under such circumstances; but the man was equal to the occasion. He had evidently weighed the matter well; had sought Divine direction; had come to realize that the Father's hand

Embarrassments.

was guiding him toward a new and arduous post of duty. He offered no further objections, but held himself ready for service or for sacrifice. Three letters, written from Boston on successive days during the anniversary meeting of the Society when he was chosen to be its leader, clearly reveal the trend of his mind in what was evidently a turning point in his life.

Letters.

“May 12 : I feel very strangely as the time approaches that may change the manner of my life. I cannot say that I have any misgiving about entering the work of the Publication Society, but the idea of change is unpleasant to me. I feel as if I were on the eve of a sort of crisis in my life. I have tried however to commit the whole matter to the Lord. He can secure or prevent my election to-morrow, according as it may or may not be his will for me to enter on that department of work, and there I try to leave it, and feel like taking the result as an indication of his will.”

“May 13 : This morning we had a reasonably full and a pleasant meeting. A committee on nominations was appointed ; what they have concocted I do not know, but soon will. I got a telegram this morning from Brother Shoemaker to this effect : ‘Let your name go before the Board,’ and so I did. . . Evening : Enclosed is the ticket of nomina-

tion, which will of course be elected. So your husband will be Secretary when you read this."

"May 14: I mailed some pencilings last night in which I said I would be elected secretary. Well, I was. So the agony is over. Whether it is for better or for worse, time will reveal; but the Rubicon is crossed, and I am now Corresponding Secretary of the American Baptist Publication Society. I feel no regret; I think on the whole it will be a pleasant change. And whether I can do any portion of what is required remains to be seen. I shall try, and try hard."

At this annual meeting, prior to the election of officers, he was appointed upon a committee "to report on the increase of capital of the Society." The report of the committee contained a resolution cordially approving "the proposal to raise the sum of one hundred thousand dollars to constitute a publishing capital for this Society," and it was immediately adopted. The enrollment showed that there were present, nineteen life managers, thirty-three life members, and fifty-one visitors. No one could then foresee, and least of all the new secretary, that thenceforward his whole life should be indissolubly interwoven with the Society until the very moment of his

entering into rest, and that under his efficient management it should take first rank in the denominational agencies of our country.

II. ORGANIZATION.

Organization and development are usually twin conditions; the more complete and thorough the organization, the more pronounced the development. Seed-sowing and harvest are things of the ever-present. Blossom and bud and ripened fruit are not infrequently found together upon the same tree. Yet organization stands to successful development somewhat as the foundation does to the superstructure. If the latter is enduring, it is due to deep-laid and strong foundations, necessarily for the most part hidden from view.

Foundation
Years.

The first twenty years of service of the new secretary may not inaptly be regarded as foundational, although steady and notable advance was made in all departments of the Society during that period. He was building carefully and wisely, seeing his way only step by step, yet keeping the goal of his aspirations clearly and unremittingly in sight, and constantly being gladdened by evidences of substantial progress.

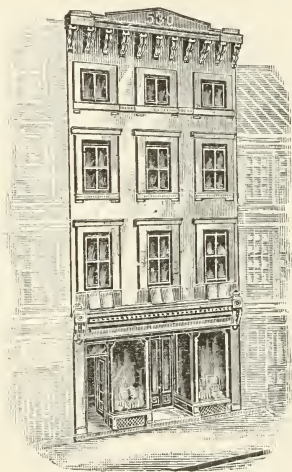
When Benjamin Griffith entered upon his duties as secretary, the Society occupied an hon-

orable place among sister organizations and in the esteem of the denomination. The average receipts of the Missionary Union during the five years previous were one hundred and twenty-five thousand three hundred and eighty-two dollars ; of the Southern Baptist Convention,

Comparative
Receipts.

twenty-two thousand four hundred and thirty-nine dollars ; the American and Foreign Bible Society, forty-three thousand six hundred and twenty-nine dollars ; the Home Mission Society, fifty-five thousand one hundred and twenty-one dollars ; the Publication Society, forty-nine thousand six hundred and twenty-four dollars, the financial depression of 1856 and 1857 having reduced the receipts. The report made in May, 1857, records "a year of anxious toil, a year of change, in consequence of which the work of the Society has experienced unusual embarrassment."

The building occupied at the time, No. 530



No. 530 Arch Street.

Arch Street, was not even then sufficient for its needs ; but the idea of anything more commodious could have existed only in the dreams of enthusiasts, and any hope of its realization must have been faint indeed.

The duties laid upon the secretary were all-absorbing, closely occupying the hours of his days, and often of his nights. God's pillar of cloud went before him, as in Israel's exodus, and in the darkness of many a time of the deepest anxiety it beamed effulgence and comfort and, in response to his entreaty, it indicated the direction he should take. At his suggestion, the varied work of the Board was re-arranged and a "Standing Business Committee" was formed, of which Mr. John P. Crozer was made "permanent chairman." By-laws were at once adopted for its guidance ; auditors were named ; reports were required monthly from each department ; the agency system was revised ; the colporter year was made to conform to the fiscal year ; the colporters were held to a more strict account of their sales, inevitable losses being charged up to profit and loss account ; and the whole system of colportage was revised, the details being carefully worked out by the secretary.

Meanwhile the financial world was in the throes of a great convulsion, and the Society

was imperilled. It was proposed by Mr. Crozer to borrow ten thousand dollars, "to meet pressing obligations," and to issue a mortgage upon the Society's real estate as security; "to raise a loan of five thousand dollars to meet pressing needs"; the "one hundred thousand dollar fund" effort was temporarily suspended; again, the secretary was asked to raise fifteen hundred dollars, "to meet the present exigencies of the times"; and temporary loans from banks were authorized and arranged, but no promise went unpaid, and never was a single note in bank protested. Under such circumstances, it can scarcely be imagined that the secretary had come to a downy couch of ease or to a fragrant bed of roses. Yet his courage never faltered and his faith never wavered. One who was nearest to him testifies: "He never lost heart as to the future of the Society. Of course, sometimes he would be depressed under the continuous strain, but nothing could occur that would cause him to yield to difficulties. Whatever he believed to be the Lord's work, he was sure would certainly come to a successful issue, though the time might seem long. It was the subject of his daily fervent prayers, and was accompanied by an abiding faith in the promises of God."

Confidence.

The first year of his service was now closing. At his suggestion it was determined that succeeding anniversaries of the Society should be held in close relation to those of the other Northern societies. He had accepted the editorship of "The Young Reaper," which, it was gravely resolved, should "be folded previously to being sent to subscribers." Arrangements were made to open a depository in New York in connection with the American and Foreign Bible Society, and a detailed statement prepared by the secretary was adopted, which set forth the "Principles on which our business should be conducted." These included "the keeping intact of the capital already secured, and its increase by special appeals to individuals, and not by annual calls upon the churches," and "by adding to it from year to year seventy-five per cent. of the net profits of the business"; the manufacturing to be done upon estimate and contract, the work to be open to competition; the entire receipts from the churches and schools and individuals, when given for missionary work, to be sacredly applied to that purpose, "without any deduction save the cost of collection," and "twenty-five per cent. of the profits of the business to be credited to the benevolent department."

Readjustments.

There was perhaps occasion for somewhat of

murmuring at the difficulties of the way, but not a hint of it occurs in the report prepared by the secretary for that first year. On the contrary, it was in marked contrast to those of preceding years in its courageous tone and hopeful utterances. The principles and purposes of the Society were re-affirmed, the unpaid services of the various committees of the Board were gratefully recognized, and greatly enlarged operations were proposed. It was an exceedingly strong document, and included a ringing appeal. "Will you not now," it said, "come forward, and by a single united effort place your Society in a position where, under God, it can do a work for the church and the world that shall be worthy of your name, your numbers, and your strength."

The following year brought some light. Mainly through the secretary's efforts, ten thousand dollars was obtained for the relief of the business, the announcement of which "was surprising and most gratifying to the Board." The time had now arrived for a single headship in management, and the Corresponding Secretary was made also editor, publishing agent, depository agent, and assistant treasurer. The two departments of the Society were now, after much discussion, definitely separated from each other, and thereafter the reports were dis-

A Single Head-
ship.

Prosperity.

tinct. Then followed the simplifying of methods in keeping the accounts, with entirely separate treasuries for the business and the benevolent departments. The Annual Report declared: "Prosperity has attended every department of our work." The plea for increase in the list of library books was made on the basis that "our first work is to take care of the children," and because of this, three premiums had been offered for the best manuscripts. Perhaps it was a divine prescience that suggested the closing words of the Annual Report for that year, making them now seem like a prophecy in forecasting "A publishing society whose capital shall exceed a million, whose annual issues shall be counted by tens of millions, . . . whose colporters shall thread every street and alley of the cities and towns and every road and by-path of the whole country, bearing a pure gospel to the homes and hearts of the people."¹

¹ In a wonderful way the thought of these words seems to have been realized. The Annual Report for the year ending March 31, 1894, indicates the growth in the resources of the Society, and the extent of its publications and work. The aggregate of issues during the year, including books, periodicals, pamphlets, and tracts, was thirty-five million seven hundred and sixty-one thousand four hundred and fifty copies. The missionary workers employed during the year numbered one hundred and twelve, and their fields covered thirty-nine States and Territories.

Through the generosity of Mr. John P. Crozer and Mr. William Bucknell, the Society's building was enlarged at a cost of eight thousand eight hundred and sixty-six dollars and seventy-five cents ; the condition of their gifts being that a like amount should be contributed for enlargement of the business. In this movement the secretary was not only the mainspring but the active agent. Through him, Mr. Crozer was kept in touch with every point of interest, and Mr. Bucknell was informed, so that their gifts came readily. The result was an occasion for congratulations, especially so since "*no indebtedness*" was incurred by the important transaction. There is no doubt whatever that the munificent gifts of the Crozer family, including those of Mr. Bucknell, were as a rule directly the result of the secretary's persuasive influence.

The war cloud that had been so long impending now burst in fire and flame, and havoc followed in every direction, but the Report of 1861 shows no trepidation : "The tropic hurricane will soon exhaust its fury, and will be succeeded by new beauty and bloom all over the land." The end was not so near, however, as the writer evidently believed it to be. A reduction of expenses was ordered, "in view of the present financial embarrassments and

The War Cloud.

general prostration of business," and the secretary voluntarily assumed his proportion.

In the early winter of 1861, the secretary and the Rev. J. Hyatt Smith were appointed a committee "to visit the various camps at and near Washington, to make arrangements for a general distribution of tracts among the soldiers." Of his experience while on that mission there is not space at command for detail. It was not an easy matter to obtain access to those whom he would benefit. Rain and slush and mud were his attendants, and rebuff and indifference and slight were his immediate reward. A single excerpt from a letter written during this trip must suffice: "Nov. 27. This has been a dull day every way. About ten o'clock it began to rain, and it has kept at it pretty much ever since. We spent the forenoon visiting the Navy Yard; at twelve I reached the chaplains' meeting; there were not over a dozen present. I distributed packages of tracts to each. We have engaged a carriage at a small cost of ten dollars, to make the rounds of the Virginia side to-morrow, starting at six o'clock in the morning. It will be a big day's work."

In the Camp.

Meanwhile no effort was spared to place the Society's business upon the best possible basis. A revision was made of its Sunday-school

library books, whereby they were each brought to even forms, thus lessening the cost of manufacture, and more and better engravings were introduced. While the regular receipts had declined fifteen thousand eight hundred and fifty-three dollars as compared with those of the previous year, the Annual Report admits no defeat, but gives cause for rejoicing that the books were closed "with a smaller indebtedness than we have had in ten years." Permanent funds now began to come into the treasury; work among the Freedmen was inaugurated; grants were made to the Christian Commission; and libraries were planned for the soldiers' hospitals.

It is a familiar adage that "nothing succeeds like success"; as the Society gradually emerged from its financial straits, new resources appeared. In 1864, Mr. John P. Crozer established the "Ten Thousand Dollar Fund" for colportage; the following year the "Five Thousand Dollar Fund" for ministers' libraries. The gain in receipts over those of the previous year was forty-four thousand dollars. At the opening of the fiscal year 1865, the Society's capital had increased to one hundred and nineteen thousand eight hundred and seventy-six dollars, with real estate valued at twenty-six thousand dollars; the profits for the

previous year having been thirteen thousand one hundred and seventy-three dollars; and another advance in receipts had been gained over the preceding year, amounting to forty-three thousand six hundred and twenty-two dollars. During that year the "National Baptist" was started, the special fund for its publication being mainly secured by the secretary.

The Annual Report for 1865 is exultant in announcing "the most prosperous year the Society has ever known." But a shadow had fallen in the death of Mr. John P. Crozer, whose gifts had amounted to twenty-four thousand five hundred dollars, and in whose memory a fund of fifty thousand dollars was established by his heirs.

Bible Distribu-
tion.

In January, 1866, the secretary and Dr. J. Wheaton Smith were requested by the Board "to distribute twenty thousand Testaments among the colored people of the South." The broken-up condition of the South made the journeying difficult and dangerous. Three days and two nights were occupied in getting from Charleston to Savannah by steamer, a distance of one hundred and sixty miles, the vessel being "small, crowded, and uncomfortable as possible." He wrote: "I never made such a journey, and pray that I never may again." But he testifies gratefully to the

general appreciation of his mission: "The Testaments serve us, or the Society, many a good turn. The roads down here are very accommodating. They not only pass me free, but charge nothing for meals on this boat." There were trials almost innumerable on the way, but his purpose was accomplished with faithfulness. His interest in the colored people was intense, and nothing seemed too much for him to undertake in their behalf. He thus speaks of one call that he made: "I visited two colored schools of adults and children; they seemed deeply interested and fully fixed in their purpose. I am pleased with these schools. Heaven bless the self-denying women that come down here to teach these poor creatures. They will have a reward."

The march of events thenceforward was rapid. The first branch house was opened in St. Louis, in 1867, the capital needed for it being secured largely through the efforts of the secretary. In a letter written from that city, he tells of his hopes and fears: "I know my brethren at home think I have come here on a fool's errand; they have no confidence that anything can be done, and possibly they are right. However, I will make the best effort I can, and pray the Lord to prosper it. There will be satisfaction in having tried, even if I

The First
Branch House.

fail, for I regard the establishment of depositories in central cities as the one great work of the Society for some time to come."

Branch houses soon followed in New York, Chicago, and Boston. In the meantime the periodical publications were augmented successively by "Bible Lessons," "The Baptist Teacher," "Primary Lessons," and "Our Little Ones." The semi-centennial of the Society was an occasion to be remembered because of the grand work that had been accomplished. The foundations, however, were not sufficiently broad, and the most important effort of all was now undertaken. The secretary had learned to "expect great things from God and undertake great things for God." The effort was commenced by a gift of twenty-five thousand dollars by Mr. William Bucknell, providing that the amount should be raised to one hundred thousand dollars for a new building. The terms were met, and then the plan was enlarged, the final outcome being the commodious structure at 1420 Chestnut Street, completed in all its appointments at a cost of two hundred and fifty-eight thousand five hundred and eighty-six dollars and sixty-eight cents, and opened with appropriate services on February 29, 1876, with a condition imposed that it should forever remain free of incumbrance.

A New Building.



FRONT ELEVATION, MAIN BUILDING.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

ASTOR, LENOX
TILDEN FOUNDATION

The twenty years of service had been toilsome ; much of work had passed without general recognition ; but the foundations were broadly laid, with care and thoroughness ; and hence there could arise a superstructure which, under Divine guidance, would become a perpetual joy and blessing to the world.

Twenty Years
of Service.

III. DEVELOPMENT.

There is sometimes a disposition on the part of Christian people to separate certain things that God has joined together. They are devout and worshipful in the sanctuary, but careless or neglectful of their obligations to their fellows ; they pray with unction, but withhold their hand of help ; they claim that business is business, and benevolence has nothing to do with business. Not so Benjamin Griffith. He held himself as a steward of the Lord's bounty ; he believed that religion and business were proper yoke-fellows. In his broad plans for the Society that he loved, and to which he freely and unselfishly gave his life, there was no separation of the religious from the secular, in so far as the purpose and desired results were concerned. Religion was in his business, and his business was in his religion. He gathered money in order that it might be used to the glory of the

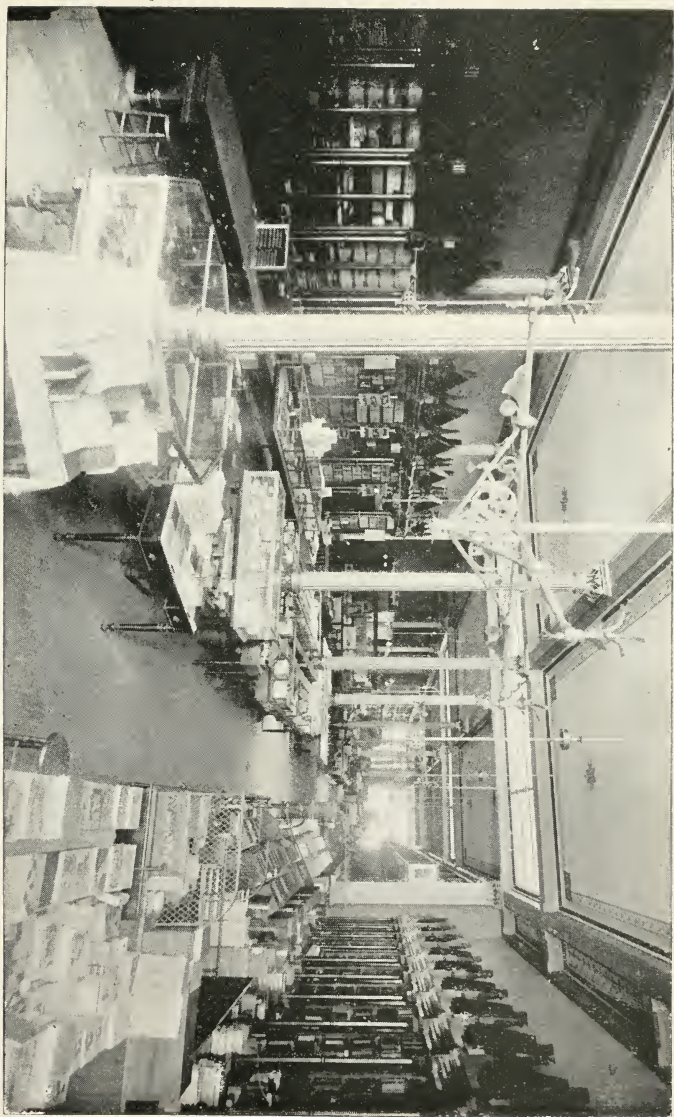
Religion and
Business.

Master ; he worked faithfully to erect a commodious structure in order that more efficiency might be gained in doing work for the Master ; he stored in reserve in order that when the hour of need should arrive, a yet grander work might be accomplished for his Lord, and for the uplifting and enlightenment of his fellow-men.

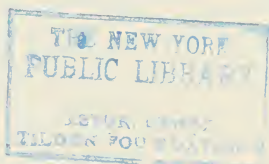
The reaction that immediately followed the Centennial led some to question whether the move to the larger building had not been premature, and its location beyond the center of trade ; but the secretary had no such doubts, and his foresight and judgment were speedily vindicated. A few looked with disfavor on the possession of so fine a property, and withheld contributions to its missionary work on the plea that "the Society was becoming rich," disregarding the distinction between its two great departments. It was the old story of willful blindness and ignorance, and one of the most potent devices of the enemy of souls to hinder and obscure divine light and truth.

Manufacturing
Facilities.

The tireless energy of the secretary was given to the development of manufacturing facilities. The boilers and engine in the basement were set driving power printing-presses upon which the periodical and other issues were printed ; a thoroughly appointed compos-



RETAIL SALESROOM.



ing room was arranged in which was done all the type-setting required ; various improvements were introduced ; the stock of wood engravings and electrotypes was much enlarged ; and in general, the establishment was brought to the highest possible point of efficiency. Such is a brief summary of a long series of years, the numerous additions being made as occasion demanded, in view of the rapid increase in number of the Sunday-school lesson helps and accompanying pictorial papers, and their enormous circulation. It was a period of marvelous growth, attended by corresponding development of facilities.

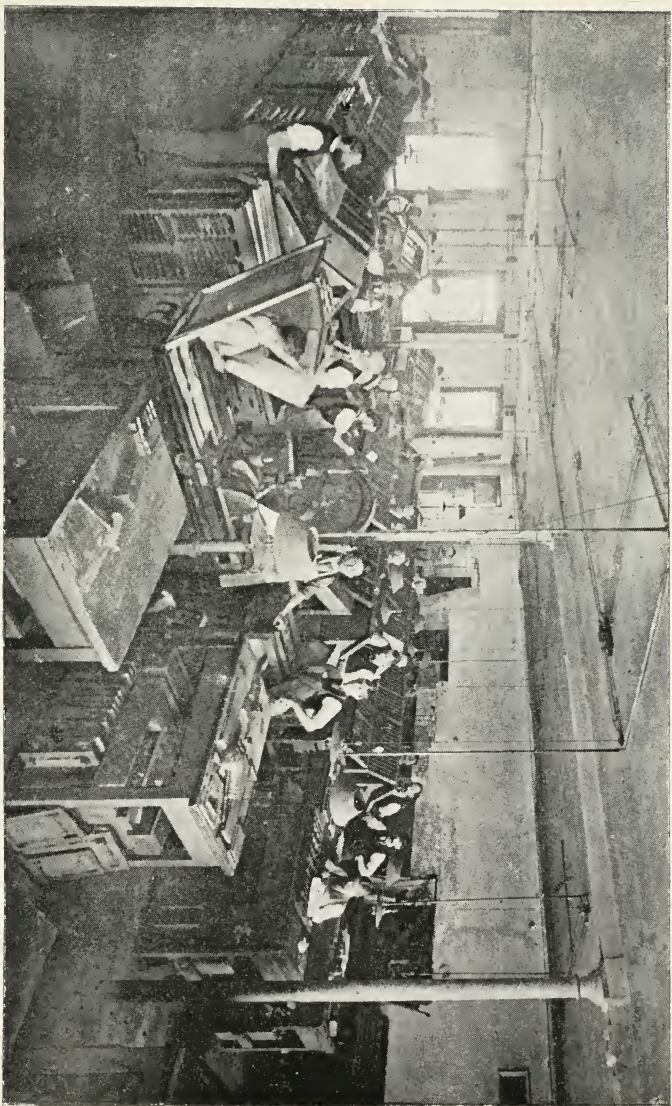
The time had passed when any one mind could compass the entire details of the Society's operations, and there were not enough hours in a day to even personally direct them. To tried and faithful helpers, who were in perfect sympathy with their chief, had therefore been assigned by him certain departments, for the administration of which they were held responsible to the Board through him ; for in every matter of importance he formed the final court of appeal. Gradually these departments became clearly defined, so that in the occasional absences of the secretary, even during several months of illness, the work went forward without the least confusion.

Different De-
partments.

In 1878, a missionary secretary was appointed, under whose efficient lead a burdensome debt to the business department was speedily canceled; Sunday-school and colporteur work was extended; missionary and Sunday-school conferences and conventions were held in many of the larger cities; and the benevolent work of the Society was pressed with vigor. All this could not have been done without the hearty and efficient co-operation of the general secretary. While this was going forward, the Sunday-school helps and pictorial papers were being rapidly multiplied.

Bible Distribution.

Closely allied to Sunday-school and missionary activity is the circulation of the Scriptures. Repeated allusions in the annual reports manifest the desire of the secretary that the Society should do its part in that direction, but so long as another organization was in the field, a due regard to Christian comity forbade any distinct effort in that line. But when the opportunity came, he was ready for action. In order to a proper understanding of the subject, a retrospect is necessary. The American and Foreign Bible Society was not proving itself equal to the needs of the hour, and in 1859 had expressed itself by formal vote as willing to become united with the Publication Society. The anniversary of the latter soon followed;



COMPOSING ROOM.



the union was declared to be desirable, if it "should be found practicable"; and the Board was instructed "to adopt all suitable measures for carrying this action into effect." The next Annual Report contained a full statement concerning the matter. There had been conferences and correspondence, extending through several months; opinions had been sought from two eminent lawyers, which were directly opposed to each other; and the Board was compelled to decline the union until the legal difficulties were removed. Of the three who as a committee managed this matter, the secretary was undoubtedly the active member, and author of the report to the Board, the closing sentence of which recommended "that the Board stand ready to resume negotiations."

A Desirable
Union.

But the question only slumbered; Bible distribution was made more prominent; specific contributions were received for Bible work; and the conviction steadily deepened that the Publication Society should be the Bible Society of the denomination. In 1868, negotiations were resumed, and the matter was supposed to be definitely settled; the Publication Society obtained permission of the Courts to change its name to "Bible and Publication Society," its signs at the parent house and branches bearing that designation, and its circulars and letter

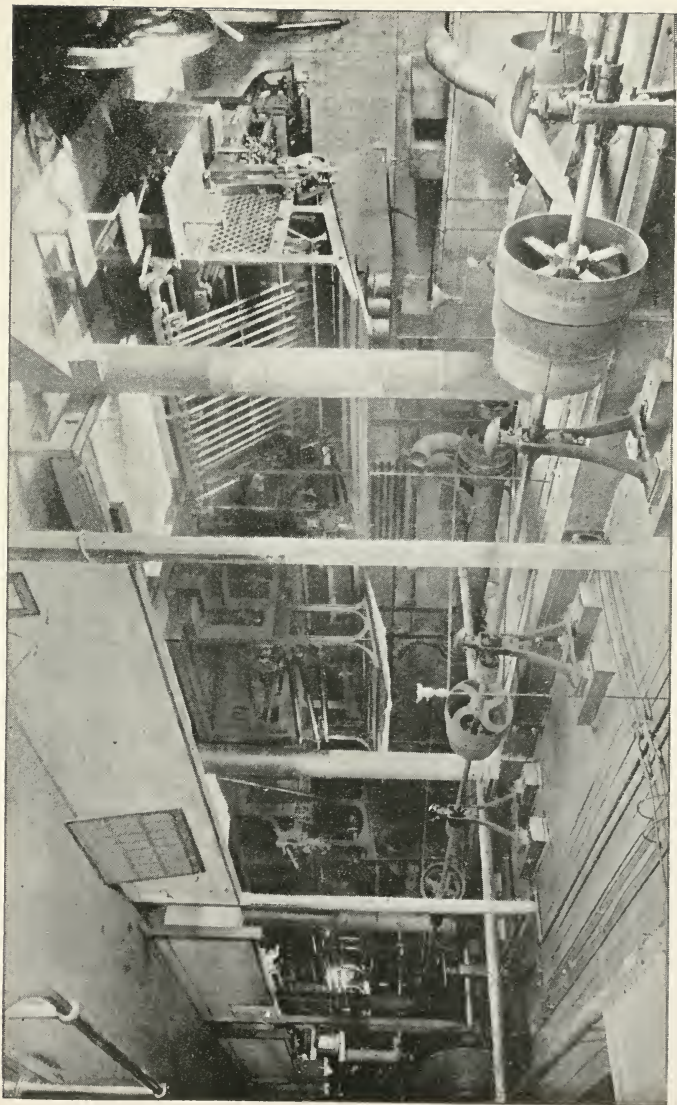
A Slumbering
Question.

heads being made to correspond. But at the last an appeal was made to a New York court, and the union was defeated, the Society afterward deciding to resume its former name.

This was a great disappointment to the secretary. He had given years of patient toil to the accomplishment of a work that was swept aside by the stroke of a pen. Nothing daunted, and believing thoroughly in the righteousness of his position, he succeeded in having the Society pass a resolution, in 1880, instructing the Board "to prosecute to the utmost of its ability the Bible work in the home field"; and in the following year the by-laws of the Board were so amended as to make provision for a special committee on Bible work.

The Bible Convention.

He was about to see good fruit from his long-continued efforts toward unification of the two societies. A Bible convention was called in 1883, interest in which was persistently cultivated by means of an extensive correspondence and numerous articles in the religious press. Leading brethren in all parts of the country were personally urged to be present and participate. Nothing was left undone to bring success. They were months of no small degree of anxiety to the secretary, and the subject gave him some sleepless nights. His desire was simply that the best should be done and



PRESS ROOM (ONLY PARTLY SHOWN).



that the question should be settled finally and forever. He had not sought to bring into the convention any elements that might control its action in favor of his views, but he had spared no pains and hesitated at no expense to make the issue clear and unmistakable. He went to that convention hoping almost against hope, but with the firm trust that God would over-rule any wrong counsels, and cause the right to prevail. While the discussion was pending, his prayers went up from his room at the hotel that the decision might be in accord with the Divine will.

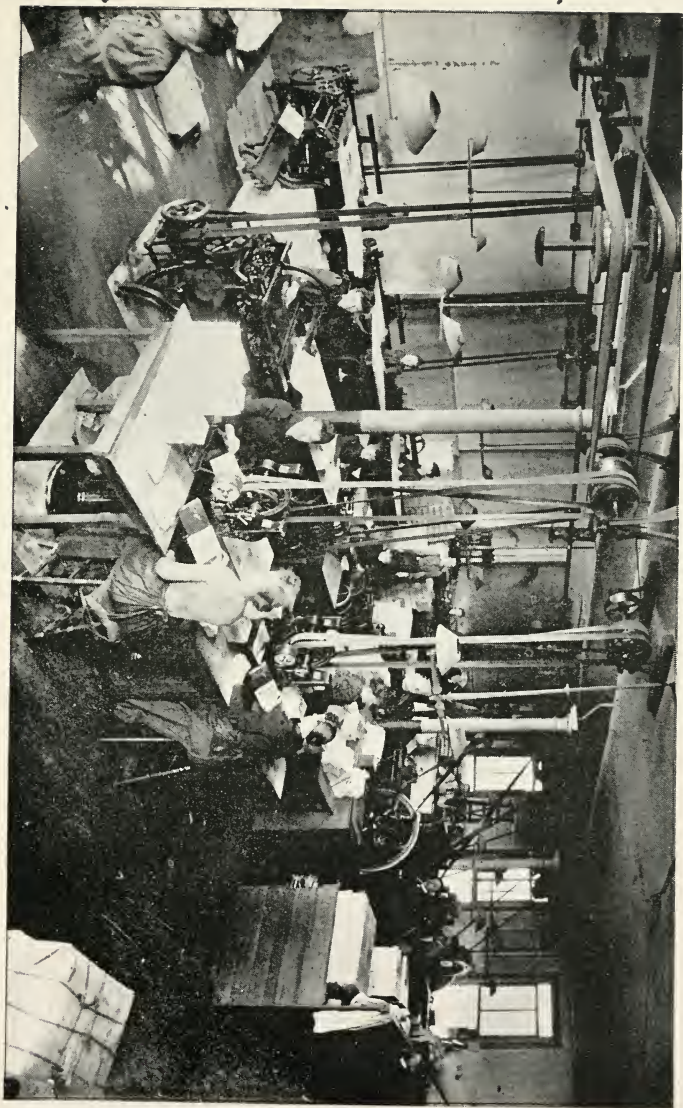
The final and unanimous vote, whereby home Bible work was committed to the Publication Society and foreign Bible work to the Missionary Union, was an agreeable surprise, and a source of satisfaction and joy to all concerned. In speaking of it in his room, after the adjournment, his eyes filled with tears, his voice for a moment failed him, and then he bowed in humble thanksgiving and prayer; and his utterances at that time will never be forgotten by the friend who knelt beside him. The "Bible Department" of the Society thus came into being, and a special secretary was appointed to administer its affairs, this officer afterward being given the responsibility for the Missionary Department also.

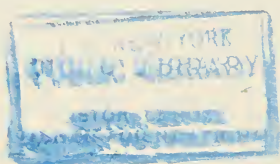
The Bible Department.

If there was one desire more uppermost than another in the secretary's mind, it was that the denomination might be heartily united. In the publications of the Society he aimed to secure this result ; he placed special guards over its periodical issues, that no wrong teaching should by any possibility obtain utterance ; he had its book issues closely watched for anything that might distract or divide. He honestly and sincerely believed that with such unity of views there might be oneness of purpose, and therefore that a single Publication House for the Baptist denomination was far better than two or more. To this end he worked faithfully throughout all the long period of his service. In so doing, it was impossible that unfavorable criticism should not arise, and that enmities should be engendered through failure to appreciate his motives and understand the abiding principles that formed the basis of his acts.

While some in the North were severe upon him for an alleged disposition to especially favor the South and its interests, others in the South were ready on the slightest pretext to charge him with motives and acts that were as foreign to his generous nature as darkness is to light. If the day has not already come, it certainly will, in due time, when his relations

MACHINE STITCHING, FOLDING, AND CUTTING ROOM.





toward the whole country will appear worthy of credit rather than of blame.

Misunderstood
Relations.

In like manner, his efforts in behalf of the uplifting of the colored people were entirely misunderstood. He realized their great need; he knew their weakness and its causes; he pitied them in their distress; he would lift them to a higher plane. But in his worthy efforts, which were fraught with much of difficulty, he found some tangles not easily straightened, and awakened hostility instead of friendly help.

He was in some respects in advance of his times, but the future will set him right as to many acts in which he may have been wrongly judged. Yet there were many in all parts of the country who appreciated him at his true worth. A brother in Virginia wrote: "I have not the honor of a personal acquaintance with you, but think I shall die happier if you will allow me to assure you that the course of your maligners and yourself respectively has elicited for you my warm sympathy and affection." And, as a rule, the Southern Baptist press was minded to deal fairly with him and his deeds.

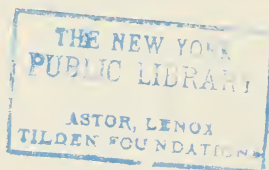
The later years had in them much of satisfaction. He had come nearer to realizing his ideal than falls to the lot of most men. The Society's periodicals had been broadened and

extended until they covered every known want—sixteen in number, and graded in character, with alternative courses to meet all preferences, and circulated by many millions; in the book department, the highest efficiency—the quality and style of the issues having steadily improved, and the range of publications complete; the business so extended that six branch houses were necessary in order to carry it on, and all of these doing well. In addition, a reserve fund had accumulated, sufficient to provide for greater manufacturing facilities, which his prevision had clearly perceived would soon be necessary. The Sunday-school and Colporter and Bible work had come to be more and more efficient as the years moved on; certainly he had reason for self-congratulation, if he had been so disposed.

The last great effort of his life as secretary was in connection with the young people's movement, in which he was intensely interested. It rested heavily upon his heart. In it he thought there was hope for the future of the denomination. For it he was willing to spend and be spent. The work is too recent for us to expect that meed of recognition which he so eminently deserves, both as to its inception, its guidance, and its earlier results. Time will bring justice to his memory in this as in

II AND-FOLDING AND SHEET ROOM.





all else, and the purity of his motives and devotion of his life will be made clear as the morning sunlight.

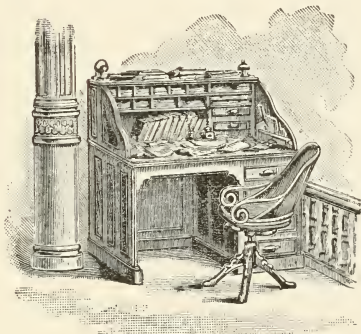
He was gifted with a delightful faculty of impressing his near associates and co-workers with the fact of his friendship, and this was because of genuine interest in them. Hence such expressions, as follow: "For twenty-five years

he has been my ideal leader";

"I learned to esteem him for his noble traits of character, his lovely Christian spirit, unstinted benevolence, and increasing self-denial"; "One

of those rare exceptions in which religion and business happily blended without spoiling the man"; "His life seems to me to have been one prolonged benediction. Toward all men he was charitable, magnanimous, forbearing, and loving"; "Ever the same kind-hearted Christian gentleman."

There came a day when the familiar face and beloved form of the dear leader was absent



His Desk.

Absence

from his usual place in the office. The desk at which he had sat for many years would never again be opened by his hands ; his chair was empty ; an oppressive silence brooded over the establishment he had so long managed ; tears started unbidden in many eyes, as with bated breath the word passed from one to another : " Dr. Griffith is dead " ! From far and near men came to honor his memory ; telegrams and letters from Boards and societies poured in, freighted with tender regard ; and as the grave closed upon his mortal remains, nature herself seemed in sympathy with those who reverently and silently bowed beneath the trees in the churchyard.

The employees of the Society cordially united in providing a bronze bust of one who had been as father to many and friend to all of them, and it will have honorable place always in the Society's building. While the bronze verisimilitude of its late honored Secretary may serve to remind of his personal appearance, and the sculptured stone above his mortal remains may suggest his earthly work, his best and truest monument will be the American Baptist Publication Society.

C. R. BLACKALL.

V.

LITERATURE AND THE PRESS.

There is in all intellectual experience a principle corresponding to that moral principle which gives efficacy to prayer. The mind must have faith in order to achieve anything.—*Prof. Austin Phelps.*

V.

LITERATURE AND THE PRESS.

THERE are three relations one may sustain to literature. The first alone of these is held by most of us. It is that of reception, of taking in more or less that which is produced by the press in the name of literature. We traverse the level slopes of prose, or rise to the sunlit heights upborne by the inspiration of poetry; move slowly and tamely it may be under the guidance of science, which eschews brilliancy and epigram since it seeks the truth, or are rapt by the impulse and anticipations of religious fervor; and in so doing sustain the most intimate relation to literature, and render it the most essential service. For few would write if there were none to read. The rumble of the press must be supplemented by the perusal in the study.

This relationship Dr. Griffith illustrated to a fair, if not to a remarkable, degree. In that pleasant library of his into which the afternoon sun could send its cheer, and from the windows of which he could look upon the

beautiful lawn which throughout the years experienced so much of his loving care, he held communion with those who still dominate human thought. Leighton and Alexander and Owen, Paley, Chalmers, and Dick, with Luther and Charnock, were among those who laid for him as they have laid for others the foundations of culture and of faith. During the later period of his life the cares of his great office rested heavily upon him and left him little time to withdraw into the privacy of the printed page. But to look at a work of art is to be impressed by it, and to be surrounded by great books is to constantly feel their influence.

In Lighter Mood.

During these later years too, as many another one has done, our friend found respite from his cares in the lighter thought of fiction; and Scott and Dickens, with Hawthorne and Muhlbach, came in to do their part to give relief. Books of travel too loaned him their charm, and with Stanley he plunged into the wilds of the Dark Continent, or with Du Chaillu, visited the Land of the Midnight Sun.

Perhaps it was in part because of the friendliness of Dr. Griffith's character that he sought *personality* in the books he read. Maurice speaks of the impersonality of Reviews in

which we find the "we" instead of the "I," and of the fact that because of this there is less of friendship between them and us. It was because of this, it may partly be, that Dr. Griffith in these later years of his life sought more than before he had done the book of travel and romance. In the one and the other there are the personality of the author and the moving throng of characters. They are our fellows, though the latter move in a mysterious realm, and we company with them as we cannot with an abstraction. And so amid the heavy responsibilities of the business he had done so much to build up, in the seclusion of his home and the brief intervals of rest, our friend sought respite and friendliness likewise in the chronicle of travel or the work of fiction, moving amid the unfolding interest of his fellow-beings, as they were wrought upon by the skillful touch of the author's pen.

Another relation one may sustain to literature is that of authorship. Vast numbers in this day hold that relationship, and many more are ambitious to secure it. This ambition exists too, quite apart from any emoluments. Thought causes movement in the minds of men, and the average of culture is so high that this movement finds expression, and the presses groan with the result.

Another Relationship.

Dr. Griffith did not to any considerable extent join the army of writers. He had not time perhaps in his maturer years when he had something to say. He was a man of deeds, and the demand for action was unceasingly clamorous. The machinery of his great plant was ever in motion, and he who had it in charge must needs be obedient to its call.

And yet he could have written and written well. His strong, earnest, virile nature could have found voice and made itself heard. When duty demanded his pen it promptly responded to the summons. It was wholly that duty's servant. It turned aside to no flowers of speech. Straight as the straight line, it aimed at its purpose. His style was thus an epitome of the man. "All the virtues of a style are in their roots moral," one has said. The moral nature of this man in its earnestness, simplicity, directness, found itself mirrored in his written sentences.

His Style.

The Annual Reports of the Publication Society during these series of years bear witness on this point. Nor were they by any means devoid of skill in the marshaling and expression of his thought. Some who read these words will recall the really splendid way in which, in the Annual Report of 1893, the last his lips were to dictate, he met the charge of

some, that because the Society was a great business house, and had large vested interests and property, therefore it did not need the gifts of the denomination in aid of its benevolent work. One of the closing sentences, because of its strength, nor less for its truth, may be given here: "Its property is acquired because such provisions are an essential part of such a work, and save outlays otherwise disabling, if not destructive; and these pleas for denial of assistance, because God has through liberal Christians provided some facilities for effective labors and for relief of the struggling or sinning, surely is from lack of thought or from lack of knowledge."

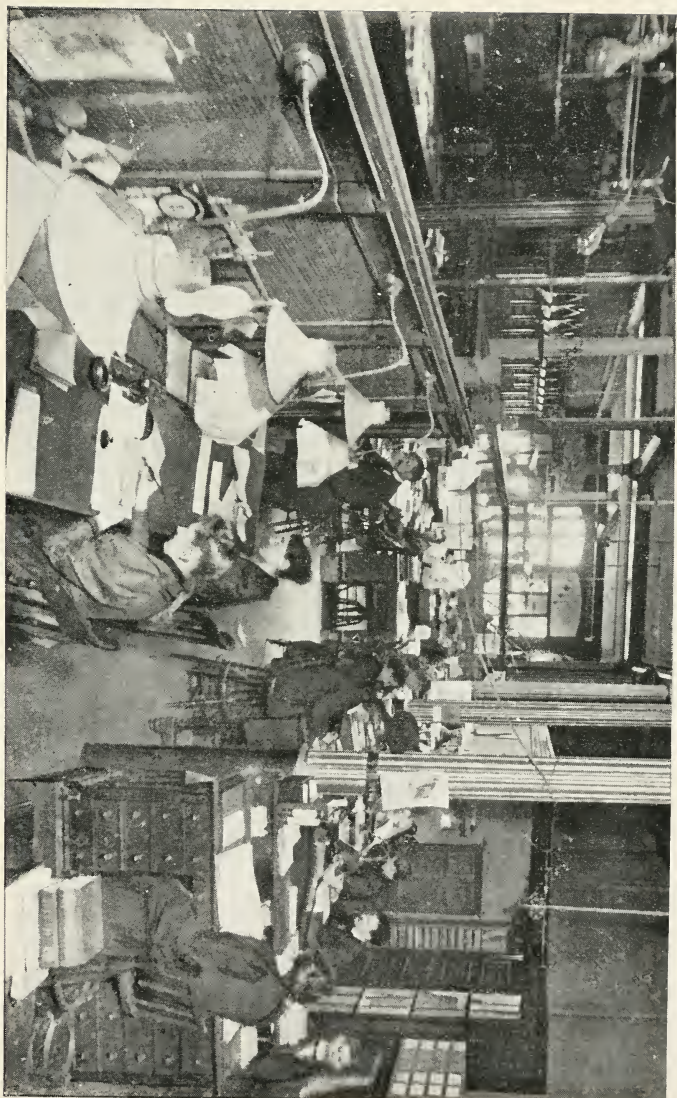
The third relation one may sustain to literature, that of publisher, was occupied by Dr. Griffith in a manner that falls to the lot of few. As the executive head of a great publishing house, it was for him to reach out and secure thought and body it and send it out to do its work among men. He recognized the power of the press as the most tremendous of the centuries. He knew that a "good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life." He began in the day of small things. Others will tell how small these were and of his effort for enlargement. He recognized the

A Third Relation.

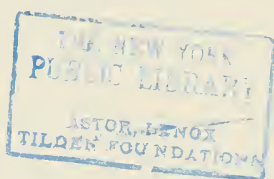
fact and sought to meet the need. In the first Annual Report penned by his hand, that of 1858, he said: "It is proposed that the denomination's Publishing Society shall emerge from its littleness and conduct a business such as will be consistent with the wants of this great Christian communion. . . You have had a thirty-four years' experience of the insufficiency of a meagre publishing business for the Baptist denomination. Will not this suffice?"

How magnificently the denomination rallied to this work at his appeal, and how his own influence shaped and led in the advance, the story of the last four decades would most eloquently reveal. Periodicals for young and old multiplied. Volumes on themes timely and essential were sent forth. The most important publication of the Society, "The American Commentary," was begun and completed during his term of office. His own hands, already full, held in addition the "Young Reaper" and "Sunlight," which he established, and which he edited to the end. Themes for tracts, those ever-ready skirmishers of a faithful ministry, were constant objects of his quest. Some of the most telling on the Society's list owe their origin to him. In his later years the young people's work appealed to him, and the genesis of literature adapted

Multiplied Publications.



PERIODICAL DEPARTMENT.



to their needs elicited his thought. And thus as the years went by, he responded to their exactions.

Nor did success dampen ardor. Not infrequently it does. Laurels won are sometimes laurels lost. Sated with the attained, the man turns his eyes from the possible. "Many a man," it was said of Mr. George W. Childs, "having achieved the supreme success which bore him on its crest for so many years would have been content to drift on its sure current. But it was Mr. Childs himself who recognized that changed conditions call for changed methods, and who modified and enlarged his lines to meet advancing requirements." With equal justice the words might have been uttered of Benjamin Griffith. His own thought kept step with progress, and his acts met its demands.

Unabated Ardor

We have spoken of the friendliness of Dr. Griffith's nature seeking kinship in the works he read. This characterized him as publisher. He belonged to a class not wholly popular among authors. Indeed, some of these last deem the former existent only for their oppression. Campbell, it is said, proposed at a literary dinner the health of Napoleon because he had "shot a publisher." Few, if any, had that feeling respecting Dr. Griffith. It would

be remarkable if he wholly escaped. Rejected MSS. are not wont to gender amiability in the minds of their authors, and not infrequently every other cause than the true one is assigned for their declinature. It would be strange if Dr. Griffith wholly escaped the odium of his class. But it would be just as strange if it obtained to any great extent. Behind the product he saw the producer. The necessarily mercantile aspects of the book or article were not permitted to veil the interests of the author. Back of the work there were present to him the men and women in whose brain and heart it was born. Many of these called him friend. Many will keenly feel his loss. Among the expressions of regret that have turned toward his resting place, none have been more sincere than those from them who wrote that he might print.

Work Unceas-
ing.

Dr. Griffith's work will go on. No man is essential. After his hands are still and his brain at rest, others will assume and carry on his uncompleted task. But while the types of the Publication Society shall embody thought and its presses multiply the volumes that will broaden the area of apprehended truth, there will be reason for gratitude that Benjamin Griffith was ever connected therewith.

PHILIP L. JONES.

VI.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL WORK.

The Sunday, or Bible-school, is the Church at work studying and teaching the Word of God.—*Motto of the National Baptist Sunday-school Convention, 1872.*

VI.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL WORK.

FEW have done more for the training of the young than Dr. Griffith. From his early manhood it called out his personal efforts, and in no part of his official career was there anything which more distinctively characterized him. He was never insensible to the greatness of the work assigned him. No part of it did he ever neglect. With conspicuous ability he pushed it on in its several lines. His successful management for more than the lifetime of a generation of a business which, without a reverse, a shadow, or a stain, ran up, as has been shown elsewhere in this volume, from that of small proportions to one of vast volume, showed his pre-eminent fidelity and ability. Any banking house or mercantile establishment would have been fortunate to secure him for a partner or a manager. Any one of our great missionary societies might have been safely trusted to his hands. But we can see how wisely God ordered it, when this man of richest gifts was called to man-

Conspicuous
Ability.

Many-sided.

age the affairs of "The Society which cares for the children." In claiming that he was peculiarly adapted to this part of his work, I do not mean to imply that he lacked adaptation to any part of it. He was a many-sided man, and he worked well wherever and however he had to work. One of the most remarkable things about him was his adaptability to whatever demanded his attention. As the hues of the rainbow are blended in the bright light of the sun, so the traits of excellence were blended in him. No one fact in his history stood alone, but all united in such ways as to make his life and work harmonious and complete. His enthusiasm in regard to any branch of the Publication Society's work might have led some to think that that particular department was his hobby. But he had no hobby. He was simply set on doing well whatever he undertook. He moved forward the various departments of his work as a skillful general moves forward his men. And so it is not too much to say that into the Sunday-school department he threw the best that was in him. He believed in the Sunday-school. He sought to promote it, not because he was officially required to do so, but because he believed in it, and personally loved it.

The Society whose management was for

thirty-six years so largely in the hands of Dr. Griffith, was originally a tract society only. For sixteen years it continued simply to do the important, but limited, work indicated by its name, "The Baptist General Tract Society." In 1840, its scope was enlarged, and its name changed to "The American Baptist Publication and Sunday-school Society." Its object was then declared to be "to publish such books as are needed by the Baptist denomination, and to promote Sunday-schools by such measures as experience may prove expedient."

Sunday-schools were at that time in their infancy. But they were beginning to show the part they were to have in the life and activity of American Christianity. In New England, a Baptist Sunday-school society called "The New England Sabbath-school Union," had been formed, but its financial condition was not satisfactory, and sixteen years later, or in 1856, its entire effects were bought by the Publication Society.

The first action looking toward the formation of a Baptist Sunday-school society for the whole country seems to have been taken by the Hudson River Association, in 1839, when it was declared that there was urgent need of "a Baptist Sunday-school Union to furnish a juvenile literature, corresponding to

our scriptural convictions." The next year this thought was embodied in the constitution of the re-organized Tract Society, which from this time became the Sunday-school Union of American Baptists.

Colporter Work.

The colporter work of the Society had not yet been fully organized, but was beginning to take shape. The Board had already announced a plan of sending out through the country



*Andreas Wiberg,
First Swedish Colporter.*

"traveling agents, who shall be well supplied with denominational books and tracts," and other religious publications. In the Annual Report of the Society, for 1841, these "traveling agents" were called "colporteurs," and, according to that careful student of his-

tory, the Rev. Dr. J. Newton Brown, that was the first time the technical name "colporteurs" ever appeared in any regular American official document. The work was begun, and the name used by the American Baptist Publication Society nearly a year before there was any formal discussion in regard to it by any other society in the country.

Almost from the first the colporters appear to have been Sunday-school missionaries, as

well as traveling agents to sell books. Dr. Griffith found them thus engaged when he came to the secretaryship. He sought to enlist them more and more in this branch of their work. In his first Report he said: "Our colporters have received special instructions to form a new Sunday-school wherever one is needed and can be permanently sustained." While in certain circumstances he did not discourage the organization of schools where there was little promise of more than a brief existence, he always had an eye to permanent results. Hence he sought to have Sunday-schools so planted that they might naturally grow into churches. And it was a great joy to him that the Society's agents, chiefly during the period of his official management, organized nearly ten thousand Sunday-schools, out of which grew more than a thousand churches.

The Sunday-school work of the Society received constantly increasing attention throughout the whole of Dr. Griffith's official connection with it. He often spoke of what "the Board" proposed to do and of what "the Board" had done. But, excellent as his Board always was, any one who knows the history of the Society for the last three decades knows that the impulse to all its grandest undertakings came from the Secretary. In one of his

Sunday-school
Work.

early Reports, after speaking of the great work which the Sunday-school could accomplish, he said: "Impressed with these convictions, the Board last year announced the purpose to add to their manifold work a distinct Sunday-school mission work." And then he added: "It is our privilege this year (1867) to report that the enterprise has been inaugurated. All the colporters have been charged to give special attention to the formation of Sunday-schools, and they have organized a hundred and twenty. But in addition to these, the Board have placed in the field twelve strictly Sunday-school missionaries; men whose single aim is, by every possible means, to improve schools already formed and to organize new schools; men who are adapted by nature and grace to this peculiar work." In reference to the future, he said: "The Society is preparing for the performance of a great Sunday-school work"; that is, he was leading the Society on to undertake it. And he was leading quite as fast as our people generally were ready to go. A few, however, were anxious to go faster. Alluding to their impatience, he said: "The question has arisen, whether it would not be well to form a Baptist Sunday-school Union." He answered: "We have such a Sunday-school Union already. The Publication Society is pre-eminently a

Sunday-school Society. It is doing all kinds of work that any new Baptist Sunday-school Union could do. If the work is not on a sufficiently large scale, all that is needed to properly enlarge and extend it, is more capital and a more general patronage on the part of the denomination."

His desire to enlarge the work of the Society in this direction led to the appointment, in 1871, of a Sunday-school secretary, whose duties were defined to be, "to develop Sunday-school benevolence; to organize the Sunday-school forces; to extend Sunday-school missions; to educate Sunday-school workers; and to secure the Sunday-school book patronage." Dr. Griffith's estimate of the importance of the work contemplated in this appointment was shown in his letter communicating the action of the Board, in which he said: "The appointment is unanimous and very hearty. . . Certainly there is no greater work within the range of the denomination.

Enlargement.

"Now, my dear brother, allow me to express the most earnest desire and entreaty that you will accept this appointment. You can accomplish in it a dozen times more than you can in any pastorate in the world."

From that time till now, the Society's Sunday-school mission work has been pushed as

vigorously as possible in some of the older States of the East and in most of the newer States of the West. Soon after this, it began its great Sunday-school mission work among the colored people of the South. In this Southern work, Dr. Griffith took the liveliest interest. At each return of the Sunday-school secretary from the South, his report of experiences and observations there was received with eager delight by the corresponding secretary. The good will shown by the leading whites of the South gave him great satisfaction. Every indication of the progress of the work among the colored people gave new inspiration to his efforts in their behalf. With some of these colored people he was personally acquainted, and in some of the missionaries then selected and set to work he had an interest awakened which continued to his dying day. Some of them are still in the service of the Society. Dr. Griffith was not what may be called an emotional man, but often were his eyes filled with tears at the story of what was seen and done among this simple-minded people. And one who could enter as he did into sympathy with them, would feel that if the Publication Society had done nothing else, its existence was justified by what it did for them.

Among the Col-
ored People.

But his view was not confined to any one

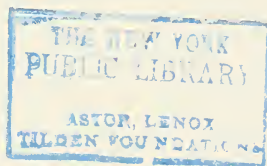
class or section. His eye swept over the whole Sunday-school world. Being at the head of the Society, which he himself styled "pre-eminently a Sunday-school Society," he sought not only to multiply Sunday-schools, but constantly to improve and elevate them. To this end, he began at his entrance upon the secretaryship to secure not only a larger number, but a better class of Sunday-school publications. It was no easy matter to realize his ideal in regard to the proper supply of Sunday-school libraries. Good writers were not easily obtained, and willing readers of the best books were almost as hard to find. But for nearly forty years he labored on in what he believed to be the right direction, and with what success the large number and the high character of the Society's juvenile publications bear witness. His constant efforts to improve the character and tone of "The Young Reaper" may be cited as an illustration, also of what he sought in the line of juvenile literature. Soon after he became secretary of the Society he assumed the management of the "Reaper," and continued to personally edit it until his death; and he may, indeed, have been said to have carried on this work which he greatly loved still farther; for, anticipating what he had to do, he had the matter all arranged for

Juvenile Literature.

the paper for four months longer than he lived. He died in October, but every two weeks thereafter, until the February following, more than one hundred and thirty thousand copies went to the children, who thus had a freshly issued number of Dr. Griffith's charming little paper. And through all those weeks, with most touching truthfulness it might be said, that "he being dead, yet speaketh." The same was true of the "Sunlight," the companion of the "Reaper," which he founded and also edited.

Excellent as the "Reaper" was when he took it, its excellence continually increased, and he left it unsurpassed by any paper of the kind in the world. Its circulation also continued to increase, till he was able to report it as amounting to more than three million copies per year. The writer has known him to say that he had no higher joy than when he learned that something in the little sheet had proved a blessing to its readers.

The number and character of the "Helps" to the right understanding of the Scriptures, prepared for teachers and scholars under his direction, no one would have thought possible, even twenty-five years ago. Among the various publishing houses in the United States, the Society of which he was the manager was





MAILING DEPARTMENT.

among the first to adopt the International system of Bible Lessons, which came into use in 1873. He never wavered in his personal adherence to the system, and he multiplied the "Helps" issued by the Society till, at his death, more than a million teachers and scholars were thus supplied. Yielding to the demand of some of the Society's patrons, he arranged a year ago for the publication of an alternative course of lessons, while he himself adhered to the course which has now been in use for more than twenty-two years, and is used, it is said, by more than ten millions of people.

But Dr. Griffith did not simply seek to enlist others in Sunday-school work, he engaged in it himself. On an earlier page of this volume the story has been touchingly told of his Sunday-school work when a student. As a pastor he regarded his Sunday-school as an arm of power. When at the head of a great Society, he found time and had a heart to study and teach the same lessons which he was helping others to study and teach far away in the West, and on the plantations and in the cabins of the South. His adult Bible classes at Upland and in Philadelphia will long cherish his memory, and many belonging to them will doubtless have better views of truth and

Personal Devotion.

duty because of the instruction he gave them. Believing as he most thoroughly did, that none can ever get too old to go to Sunday-school, as opportunity offered he gathered around him those of mature years who were willing to study the word of God. Still his heart went out in an especial manner for the young, and to meet and teach the children was his especial delight. Long and weary walks he took to meet the children whom he taught in winter in a mission school in Philadelphia. The last Sunday afternoons of his life were given to the children at the Orphanage. And it is safe to say that no part of his great work gave him greater joy than he had in pointing these children to Jesus, and in afterward seeing forty of them baptized upon profession of an intelligent faith.

His Reward.

How great his reward in heaven is to be no one can yet tell, but it cannot rise higher than that bestowed by the Master's words: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

WARREN RANDOLPH.

VII.

ORGANIZING AND ON THE PLAT
FORM.

Set all things in their own peculiar place,
And know that order is the greatest grace.

—*Dryden.*

His enthusiasm kindles as he advances ; and when he arrives
at his peroration it is in full blaze.—*Burke.*

VII.

ORGANIZING AND ON THE PLAT-FORM.

I. ORGANIZING.

TO organize well one must himself be well organized. And nobody who knew Dr. Griffith failed to recognize the fact that this was pre-eminently true of him. Physically, mentally, morally, he was compactly built, and symmetrically rounded out. He had marvelous command of himself, which accounts in large measure for the masterful command that he had of others. With an utter absence of all arrogant assumption of superiority, when it came to the marshaling of forces and organizing for work, his superiority was felt and cheerfully conceded by his associates rather than asserted by himself.

His Superiority.

Standing in the midst of the magnificent structure on Chestnut Street, in Philadelphia, which for so many years now has served the American Baptist Publication Society as headquarters, one cannot say of Dr. Griffith, as was said in St. Paul's, London, of Sir Christopher

His Monument.

Wren: "Would you see his monument, look about you," for his monument is something far other and nobler than that stately pile. It is as broad as the continent, and will be as enduring as the Society of which for so many years he was the master spirit. Considered as an organization, it may be said, without seeming to be invidious, that the American Baptist Publication Society can hardly be matched by any other on the continent. And what it is in that regard is more largely due to him than to any other one man who has ever been connected with its history. It has been said that to make a college "you must have books, brains, and bricks." To continue the alliteration, it may be just as well to add "bonds,"—plenty of them, and bearing a good round rate of interest. And yet all these together do not constitute a college. They are merely an aggregation, and an aggregation is not necessarily an organization. Some of us have known of institutions, civil and ecclesiastical, that were little other than sand heaps, and hence were at the mercy of every wind and wave. There is a mighty difference between a sand heap and a tree. Organization means life. Benjamin Griffith had life in himself; it was a life that was hid with Christ in God, and that life he infused into

whatever he touched. He did not indeed plant the seed which grew to such giant strength,—honor to whom honor, for other men labored and he entered into their labors,—but he imparted to it of the fullness of his own rich life, and so it developed as never before.

The history of the Society under his administration was not unlike the raising by Elisha of the Shunammite's son, concerning which we read, that the prophet "went up and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands, and he stretched himself upon him ; and the flesh of the child waxed warm."

Whether the Shunammite's son ever grew to sturdy manhood we are not informed, but what that Society has come to which was only a child when Dr. Griffith first came in contact with it, all the world knows well enough. The throb of that great heart that sends so rich a tide of life to the remotest extremities of the American continent, but echoes the throb of that great heart that has now ceased to beat.

Or, to change the figure, the Publication Society under his fostering care became a mighty banyan tree, whose central trunk was in Philadelphia, but which struck down in

A Mighty
Throb.

Boston, New York, St. Louis, Chicago, Atlanta, Dallas, until the whole land in some sense dwelt under its shadow, and the whole people partook of its generous fruit.

The widely separated Depositories of the Society were not merely isolated business establishments, but literally "Branches," partaking of a common life, animated by a common purpose, and controlled by one wise and gentle but masterful mind.

Progress.

Without a precedent has been the progress of our great Republic during the last thirty years of its history. The locomotive, with lungs of steel, and heart of fire, and tramp like a storm, has broken into the wilderness and gone snorting across the prairies, dragging all civilization after it. Lightning express trains flash across the land, splendid palaces, steam-driven, ploughing across the sea, cities springing into life like the flowers of the tropics, inventions, discoveries, startling us by their suddenness and sublimity, audacious enterprise, tireless activity, splendid achievement—such is this age of steam and lightning. To say that the American Baptist Publication Society, with Benjamin Griffith for its engineer, has kept pace with this prodigious progress, is highest praise, but literal truth.

Very frequently it happens that an organiza-

tion outgrows the man whose ability was equal to the demands of its earlier years, and hence there arises a felt necessity for a change of executive management. But Benjamin Griffith grew with the Society, or the Society grew with him, until before he left us he had come to see it one of the largest and most superbly equipped organizations of its kind.

And so far from the denomination feeling that the Society had outgrown the man, when death, as it seemed to us all, too soon removed him, the great and all-absorbing question was, Where among all our Baptist hosts can we find a man who can sustain the mighty load that he bore so long and well? Guided and governed by his masterful hand, in every department of its manifold work the Society moved forward to meet the inexorable wants of the times.

Not Outgrown.

Its missionary and colportage work alone was enough to tax to the utmost the energies of any one man. Its *avant couriers* were widely distributed, and were evermore pressing into the regions beyond and waking the wilderness with gospel echoes, and ever they were followed by his loving and unceasing interest. At first they trudged along on foot, with peddler's packs upon their backs, laden with leaves of the Tree of Life for the healing of the

The Colporter.

nation. Presently they rode on horses, and carried saddle-bags that were bursting with books. Then they traveled on wheels, in old-fashioned gigs or "carryalls," with larger supplies in capacious trunks. Then, as the pace of the age quickened, they rode in chapel cars, from whose windows, as they flashed across the continent, floated gospel hymns, and around which, in the pauses of travel, eager multitudes gathered to listen to the word of life. This looked like a veritable fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophetic vision of a throne on wheels, with fire between the wheels, and living creatures beside the wheels, and with the hand of a man under their wings. God has been pleased to ordain that the gospel shall not "fly abroad" without the intervention of the hand of a man. In the case of this work we cannot mistake as to whose hand it was.

In the Publication department, beginning with only a handful of tracts, for a tract society it was at the first, there was cautious advance to the printing of books, just a few, the demand for which seemed simply imperative, until finally recognizing the necessities of the times the steam-driven presses of the Society threw off by the ton all manner of periodicals, from the beautiful pictorials which delight the

“toddlers,” up through all the grades of Sunday-school Helps; and in the matter of books, all the way from the simplest primers of religious teaching up to ponderous yet luminous commentaries, such as scholars delight to place upon their shelves. To a mammoth publishing house this has grown in these years of his wise administration, and that without a debt or a breath of scandal. Not that he did all this single-handed and alone. Let us not, in praising him, do injustice to the noble and self-sacrificing toilers who were associated with him.

But let it be said to his credit that these associates were the men of his choice, and in nothing is organizing power so conspicuously displayed as in the ability to lay one's hand upon just the man that is needed when a place is to be filled and a work is to be done. No doubt he sometimes made mistakes, for he was only human, but the record of his life will show that he was marvelously sagacious in the choice of men to share with him the grave responsibilities of such a work.

Not only in the matter of the selection of subordinates was he wise beyond most administrative officers, but in the character of the men who were in some sense officially his superiors, as constituting the Board of Managers,

His Associates.

The Board.

to whom he was directly answerable. They were broad-minded, large-hearted, liberal-handed men, whose confidence he had won and whose co-operation he had secured by his enthusiasm, toil, and wise and successful administration of the work entrusted to him.

The writer of this chapter is not now connected with that Board, but he counts it one of the highest honors of his life to have been for twenty years associated with a body of men who were and are as able and unselfish as ever were entrusted with public affairs; and that body was largely the creation of the noble Secretary whose devotion enkindled theirs.

II. ON THE PLATFORM.

Very seldom does it happen that a man who is splendidly endowed and equipped for executive work is able on the platform to command enthusiastic hearing for his cause, and to guide its fortunes safely when imperilled in the sometimes tumultuous discussions of popular assemblies. Yet, such a faculty was possessed by Dr. Griffith in an eminent degree.

Nature never meant him for what they call an orator. He had not the high-strung nervous temperament, nor the phosphorescent flash that are supposed to be essential to the highest flights of eloquence. But he was highly en-

dowed with common sense. He never attempted to "bring down the house" by sallies of wit or displays of pyrotechnics. There are performers on the platform that throw off "airy nothings," iridescent with gorgeous rhetoric, and watch them as children do the soap bubbles they have blown; but Benjamin Griffith never thus belittled his manhood or trifled with his audience.

As a Speaker.

He never spoke for the sake of speaking, but only because he had something to say. He was not deficient in hearty appreciation of genial humor and of genuine eloquence, but he had no special penchant for *post-prandials*, and his forte lay not in fireworks. He was modest and diffident even to the point of self-depreciation, and therefore never spoke if he could help it.

Only invincible conviction and a constraining sense of duty ever brought him to his feet. But when once on his feet he stood there very solidly. His face, his tones, his manly bearing, could not fail to make you feel that you were listening to a man that had rock-rooted convictions and the courage of them. Courteous and chivalrous was he, but as dauntless as Daniel.

His Dauntless-
ness.

And there were occasions, critical occasions, when great issues were at stake, and great

principles involved, when Benjamin Griffith, abandoning the quiet reserve which was habitual to him, rose to the height of the heroic, and commanding passion of holiest sort flamed forth from the depths of a glowing soul, and men were swayed and swept by the resistless might of unstudied and unaffected eloquence. This was no stage thunder, nor rhetorical red fire, but white-hot conviction that rolled forth like a lava flood. Whether those who heard him always agreed with him or not, no right-minded man ever failed to credit him with sincerity of utterance and loftiness of aim.

Many men of more brilliant gifts have enchainèd the attention of our denominational assemblies, but no man of our time has ever been listened to with profounder deference, or has commanded a larger measure of the public confidence.

To be able wisely to plan, successfully to execute, and forcefully and convincingly to commend to public confidence in public speech—these three marvelous faculties are rarely combined in a single human being, and yet they were combined and harmoniously blended in the great Secretary who has now gone to his rest and reward.

P. S. HENSON.

VIII.

THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S MOVE-
MENT.

He felt that the young formed the hope of the church. In their enthusiasm he despaired, in their faith he found strength, and for their consecration to the truth he was ready to consecrate himself.— *Anonymous*.

VIII.

THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT.¹

LONG before the existence of any of the great organizations now so prominently connected with young people in Christian churches, Dr. Griffith manifested a profound concern in the organized development of our own young people. He believed their welfare and the future of our churches to be dependent upon it. The first mention of the subject which I recall, was during the session of the Philadelphia Association, held in the Second Baptist Church of Philadelphia, some-

¹ It will be my endeavor in this chapter to present such a picture as I may be able of the connection of Dr. Griffith with the interests of the young people. Some portion of this paper will depend for its statements upon facts with which I was not personally connected, but about which I have gathered information from others who have been so courteous as to place their knowledge at my disposal. I shall not aim to speak chronologically, because I am not undertaking to write a history, but to present a picture. I am only aiming to show that which I have been desired to note—the unwavering and long-continued friendship of Dr. Griffith toward the interests of all our young people in all our Baptist churches.

Special Instruc-
tion.

where between the years of 1875-80. I had been invited by him to speak on the subject of Baptist Literature, and upon my intimating that I should like to receive some suggestions from him regarding the line of thought which he wished me to present, he said in substance : "All of our active churches have some sort of an organization for their young people, and have had for years. To a very large extent these are either social in their nature, or else a feeble imitation of the methods of the mother church. It seems to me that there is a special line of instruction for them apart from what they receive in the Sunday-school. Now what I want you to speak about is the opportunity that the Publication Society affords for giving that instruction along the lines of denominational polity and policy as regards local and missionary effort."

As it was almost my first opportunity of serving the interests of the Society, I was naturally very anxious to obtain the clearest conception of Dr. Griffith's wishes, and in this way I received a very distinct and emphatic impression of that regard which became so manifest later in his relations to the Baptist Young People's Union of America.

In 1890, when the anniversaries were held in Chicago, a most important meeting was

called by various well-known brethren who had become interested in the specific indoctrination of our young people. My duty as chairman of the committee of the anniversaries, made it impossible for me to attend that session; nor in fact was I brought into any real connection with the young people's movement until the time of the formation of the Baptist Young People's Union of America, in the Second Baptist Church of Chicago. The origin of that meeting would seem to have been a feeling of anxiety in regard to the stability of young people in our churches in their relations to Baptist principles—an anxiety which was caused in part by the emphasis that seemed to be placed upon ideas favoring interdenominational organization among our young people. The outcome of that meeting was the appointment of a committee to consider the situation and suggest appropriate action. It had no authority, so far as the churches were concerned, but was valuable as representing a sentiment which was soon to ripen into conviction and action.

A Preliminary
Committee.

In the autumn of 1890 there appeared in Chicago a paper devoted to the interests of our young people, under the joint editorship of the Rev. O. W. Van Osdel, and the Rev. J. M. Coon; but long before this appeared, these

A. Young Peo-
ple's Paper.

brethren were in frequent correspondence with Dr. Griffith and others with reference to the publication of a paper in the interests of the young people ; also, and growing out of this, there was in his mind a plan for an extended series of publications to be issued by the Publication Society, looking toward the education of our young people in Baptist principles. The correspondence was extensive, and several interviews with the officials of the Society were held with reference to the subject ; but the time seemed premature for the adoption of his plans, and the matter was held in abeyance, without much hope that anything could be developed therefrom. The issue of "The Loyalist" at once called denominational attention to the movement in a marked manner. It involved also immense labor, care, anxiety, and courage upon the part of its founders ; and the work they did upon it, as well as the financial responsibility they assumed, should not be overlooked in estimating the influence which helped to change tendencies into a real movement. Dr. Griffith watched its course with profound interest. It had always been his desire to have the Publication Society complete its series of papers with one devoted to the interests of young people. He appreciated the difficulties of this venture.

After a number of issues of "The Loyalist" had come before the public, Dr. Griffith felt that the opportunity had come for him to place at the disposal of the denomination the assistance of the Publication Society in advancing the interests of the young people, and accordingly an interview was held with brethren Van Osdel and Coon, which resulted in the transfer of "The Loyalist," of Chicago, to Philadelphia, to become "Young People at Work," and on January 3d, 1891, appeared in that paper, with his full approval, "The Provisions of Associational, State, and General Organization," that should be broad enough to admit all societies of Baptist young people that might desire to affiliate with such organizations, together with a local church constitution for any that might wish to adopt it.

"Young People
at Work."

Dr. Griffith from that time on became more intensely interested in this department of work than any other. It absorbed his thought, so that he might literally be said to live and breathe and have his being in the department of the young people's work.

But something more was needed than the publication of a paper. The fear, and to some extent a justifiable one, existed that the movement, which up to this time was without any accepted organization of an inclusive character,

instead of being in the direction of unity, would really prove to be divisive in effect, compelling church societies to surrender very many precious privileges and relationships before they could become affiliated in this great denominational movement.

The Philadel-
phia Conference.

To relieve churches of this apprehension, and to establish the work upon a solid basis, brethren representing all varieties of opinions were invited to a conference held at Philadelphia, April, 1891. This conference may be said to have been the origin of what is now known as the Baptist Young People's Union of America. Called by Dr. Griffith, and mainly originated by him, he used his great influence and employed his vast knowledge of the denominational condition in the interest of unity. He was a man of deep conviction and force of character. He believed Baptist churches were New Testament churches; that Baptist young people should be Baptists, not from association, but from conviction; that education would keep them true to the teachings of the New Testament, and that it was the duty of that conference to unite in some plan which, being accepted by the churches, would secure concurrent and continuous action. The sincerity and purity of his motive; the tenacity with which he insisted upon the

necessity of immediate, wise, and harmonious action ; the readiness with which he conceded to others liberty ; and the appreciation which he showed of difficulties indicated by his brethren and his large resources for promptly disposing of them satisfactorily to all, without abandoning the purpose upon which his heart was set, secured for the conference that happy issue known as the "Philadelphia Agreement." Not that this paper originated in his mind. The plan which he had considered and prepared was a document from which the "Philadelphia Agreement" differed in some very important particulars not necessary to name here. He himself appreciated the limitations of his own suggestions ; but it was not his own plan that he desired especially, but some plan that would recognize, harmonize, and unite all interests, and avert dangers which he felt were imminent. He held the conference to that idea, and so secured the action which he deemed necessary for the welfare of the denomination. If Dr. Griffith was not the founder, he certainly was the saviour of the young people's movement in our churches as a denominational power. I think that, beyond all question, it must be admitted by those who have been conversant with the movement, that what success it has achieved has been largely

A Movement's
Saviour.

due to the devotion manifested toward it in all its stages by Dr. Griffith.

Conferences.

Prior to the convention at which the Baptist Young People's Union of America was organized, at the Second Baptist Church in Chicago, a number of special conferences relating to it were held. It was at this point that I became personally associated with the movement. Called by my duty as pastor of the church in which it was desired to hold the convention to make some provision for entertainment, it was quite natural that I should be invited to attend some of these conferences which Dr. Griffith had arranged. In all of them I was surprised at the extent of his information in regard to the condition of our young people in our Baptist churches, and his knowledge and appreciation of their educational and spiritual necessities, and at every step I saw that he had thought out the problem, and that his associations with it were absolutely unselfish both regarding the Publication Society and himself.

Relations.

In a conversation had with him at my house during the sessions of the convention, the question of the relation of the Publication Society to the organization was brought up by himself. He expressed himself emphatically as believing that while to a certain extent his society might have something to do with the

direction of the movement, and as the accepted denominational agent for publication ought to be the medium of issuing its literature, yet at the same time he realized and expected that within a very short time it must be absolutely independent in responsibility, method, and purpose of all connection with any society, while acting as auxiliary to them all.

I wish to repeat that his interest in the matter, so far as he or his society was concerned, was absolutely disinterested, that he felt this in his own heart, and he thought should be recognized by others. When, for example, he placed the entire colporter force of the Publication Society at the command of pastors, to aid them in the formation of societies in their churches, he never dreamed that he was doing anything at all that should not receive the hearty and unqualified approval of his brethren everywhere, and I very well know how hurt he felt at the criticisms which ultimately led him to withdraw the help which he desired to give.

The conferences preceding the sessions of the convention were held in the Grand Pacific Hotel, Chicago. At the first the attendance was very small, and the principal object seemed to be to discover what difficulties the convention would have to encounter, and to clear

Suggestiveness.

them out of the way. Every objection that was presented was instantly met by a valuable and efficient suggestion on the part of Dr. Griffith that revealed his mastership of the situation. The second conference, held the day preceding the convention, was a conference for organization, so that when the convention began, some method of business was sure to be followed, and yet, in no such way as to deprive the convention of freedom of action. The main business of the convention was to adopt such national, State, and associational constitutions as should be acceptable to all the churches. The composition of the committee on constitution was to him a source of a great deal of anxiety. The writer of this chapter was desired by him to be the chairman of that committee, a position which he sought to avoid, but which finally, out of a sense of friendship for the secretary, and a sympathy with some of his ideas, accepted. The constituency of that committee was upon the basis of adequate representation of all possible variations of opinions. When I stated to Dr. Griffith these terms as the ones upon which I would accept that responsibility, his answer was prompt and very emphatic, and to the effect that that was also his precise idea, that he wanted to get at and embody the sentiment of the entire denomi-

nation. Members of that committee who may read this chapter will recall the fact that its sessions, while possessing the utmost freedom of discussion, were marked by a solemnity seldom, if ever, apparent in a constitutional committee.

The constitutions, as adopted, were based upon one composite in character that had been produced through Dr. Griffith's agency, and had previously appeared in the "Young People at Work." Prior to that publication these had been sent out to many persons throughout the denomination, reaching to all parts of the country. Taking this fact into consideration, and adding to it the severe scrutiny and alterations which the committee made in them, it may be well questioned whether the denomination has in its possession any documents more indicative of the wisdom of its representative men than these.

Representative
Documents.

All the characteristics which made Dr. Griffith's life one of power were manifested during the sessions of the committee. He would insist with all the emphasis of his nature upon points that seemed to him to be radical; but too, he could concede just as generously and heartily, only he had to be convinced. It was wonderful how accurately he saw the relations between different parts of

Accurate Vision.

the documents, and his eye for detail would lead him to bring in striking prominence some point, which until attention had been directed to it, had appeared to be very insignificant. He did not talk very much, but he seemed to be alert in every fibre of his being. A single question would often upset a long train of argument; a single suggestion would relieve the situation of perplexity. The report of that committee was unanimously adopted by the convention, thus securing national, State, and associational uniformity, leaving each church to adopt such local constitution as it preferred, suggesting one if no preference was expressed, and otherwise carrying out exactly the "Philadelphia Agreement."

As soon as the convention adjourned, Dr. Griffith sought to put at the command of the new organization all the resources of the Publication Society. The "Young Peoples Union," at first "The Young People at Work," under the able editorship of the Rev. Philip L. Jones, had become the organ of the society by the action of the convention. Without in any way dictating to the editor, the conferences between the secretary and editor were so frequent that the paper might be said to express the views of Dr. Griffith in regard to the opportunities, necessities, responsibili-

ties, privileges, and successes of the movement.

I very well remember a conversation with him in his office about this time. My first connection with the movement had closed with the adjournment of the convention, and we were talking unofficially together, at his desire, about its prospects. He turned to me with one of his quick movements, with the remark, "I have followed this thing for years, and my only fear is that those who are in charge of the movement among young people, do not begin to realize the work that it means, or the responsibility they are assuming." In a note that lies before me from Rev. C. R. Blackall, the expression is used, that Dr. Griffith felt toward the younger men "as a father would feel toward a promising son." The movement and he were one. "He was willing to sacrifice for it, and when it made errors, in his judgment, he suffered keen disappointment." My own experience justifies the language thus employed.

A Fatherly Feeling.

In process of time, the managers of the Baptist Young People's Union of America felt that it was absolutely necessary for them to own their own paper. Dr. Griffith, at the first, did not meet this proposal with favor. I am not sure that he ever considered that it was a

A Denver Con-
versation.

wise thing at so early a point in its career for the Union to assume such a heavy responsibility. I do know that in the last conversation which I had with him, in Denver, he freely admitted that possibly his apprehensions might in time prove groundless. He could appreciate the disadvantages to the Union of having its organ located a thousand miles away from its headquarters. He saw that the headquarters of the society must ever be at Chicago, but he never admitted that the close relationship of the Publication Society with the Young People's Union, as implied in their publication of the paper, could be in any way a disadvantage to the Union. He was unwilling to believe that the sister societies of the denomination would look with disfavor upon the Publication Society's willingness to do what it could in furnishing the young society with all its literature. Nor did he ever allow the variations of views that necessarily arose to prevent him from continuing his interest and efforts for the young people's movement. Realizing that there was a lack of literature adapted to the purposes of the movement, he at once, with the aid of other brethren, applied himself to a careful study of the Society's publications with a view of supplying such literature as might be necessary. Important con-

ferences were held between the Baptist Young People's Union of America and the Publication Society, and as a result of the conferences the Publication Society became practically, as it ought to be, the publisher of the literature which was to be recommended by the Union in its educational courses. The last conference between the representatives of the Publication Society and the Union took place at Denver. The Board of the Publication Society named Dr. Griffith, Mr. Jones, and Dr. Blackall. The Baptist Young People's Union named Mr. Chapman, Dr. Wilkins, Prof. Price, and myself. Mr. Price being absent, Dr. Henson was substituted by the Union. But one more important session to the interest of the young people was ever held. A magnificent system of primers related to the Christian Culture Courses of the young people's movement, was carefully considered, and enthusiastically adopted. The details of business arrangement were thoroughly considered, and satisfactorily and happily adjusted.

That "more important session" to which allusion has just been made, was held in the study of the First Church at Denver. As chairman of the executive committee I had felt that some formal recognition of the Baptist Young People's Union of America must

A Last Conference.

An Important
Endorsement.

be secured by the denomination through its great annual and representative gatherings, and it seemed that a good place to begin was at the anniversaries at Denver, in 1893. Accordingly invitations were sent out to the secretaries of all the societies to meet representatives of the Union. They were cordially accepted. A full, frank, and accurate statement of the purposes, plans, and conditions of the Union was presented, and a plan of endorsement was prepared by Dr. Morehouse and accepted unanimously by this conference of secretaries, each society agreeing to present it at its session during the anniversaries. The Denver anniversaries fully represented the denomination in attendance, ability, and spirituality. It was too, a delegated body, and so stood for the churches, and action therefrom was to be significant of the future of the Union. As the Publication Society held its session first, the recommendation was in due order presented by Dr. Griffith and endorsed, and this action was followed by the other societies, and with similar results. Thus Dr. Griffith, through whose influence the Union had come into being, secured for it the first public approval by the representatives of the denomination. Thus the last anniversary he attended witnessed the endorsement by the

denomination at the North of the movement which was so dear to his heart. Subsequently he expressed to me his satisfaction with the work done at Denver in the interest of the Union, and I know that he returned to his desk at Philadelphia with a heart relieved from many misgivings, and hopeful for the future of the Union.

Satisfaction.

After adjournment the writer tarried a few moments with Dr. Griffith, detained in fact by him, while he expressed his great satisfaction at feeling that nothing but the most culpable folly would interfere with the realization of the plans of the Union for the denominational education of young people. To be a Baptist, with Dr. Griffith, meant to be everything that was Christian. He did not believe that any denomination had larger liberty of thought and action than his own. He wanted the young people to be educated in regard to the principles and polity of the denomination, educated in regard to the history of the denomination, and of its leaders. It was the dream of his life ; it was the inspiration of his activities ; he was willing to be patient and forbearing, to be misunderstood, and even misrepresented, if he could only see the young people transformed, as he phrased it, from a religious mob to a religious army. He believed

that nothing but united, persistent effort would accomplish it. The morning after the conference at Denver, it was my fortune to have him call me by his side again, and for nearly an hour he went over the whole ground again. He of course, insisted, and undoubtedly he was right, that the Publication Society should have the opportunity of becoming the publishing house of the denomination, but deeper than his interest in the society was the conviction that God had called the denomination as a denomination at this hour, and this day, to the consideration and discharge of its duty to prepare its young people to give a reason for the hope that was within them.

A Deep Conviction.

It has been necessary for me to allude to my own relationship with him more frequently than under other circumstances I should feel justified ; but it is surely true, that while many brethren have contributed to the advancement of the young people's movement, to no one has it been indebted for more wisdom, sympathy, love, and co-operation, than to Benjamin Griffith.

WILLIAM M. LAWRENCE.

IX.

INTEREST IN THE YOUNG.

What can be real if that is not which so takes us out of our present selves that the weight of years falls from us as a garment ; that the freshness of life seems to begin anew.—*Austin*.

IX.

INTEREST IN THE YOUNG.

IT was many years ago on the beach of an inland lake. A party of seven wet, cold, tired fishermen gathered around a fire which their dearest friend had kindled for their comfort before they even knew that he was near. One there was of that little group whose heart was questioning whether he would be truly received into the innermost circle of dearest friends. When warmth and food had done their work, the gentle voice of the Best Beloved asked of this one: "Lovest thou me?" Instantly came the humble but earnest answer, "Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." Then to him was given sweetest charge ever committed to mortal, "Feed my lambs." Happy was Simon, son of Jonas, to be allowed to prove his sincerity by giving to the lambs of the Lord Christ not food alone, but such love and interest and tenderness as he well knew Judean shepherds gave their flocks.

A Question of
Love.

Through all the centuries since, this has

been one of the strongest proofs of true love for the Chief Shepherd, whose tender care for the young was proclaimed hundreds of years before his coming, one of the signs by which he himself should be known. And were there naught else to mark our own friend in whose memory we write, by this sign alone we should know him as a true follower of his Lord.

His Gracious-
ness.

He was one of those gracious men you sometimes meet whose simple presence is a comfort, and whose commonest words are a benediction. He spoke to all, rich and poor, young and old alike. To the young he was never patronizing, but paternal, and went among them, king of hearts, because of his evident sincerity. He had an enthusiasm for the conversion of the young. If any of the young people of his neighborhood showed any special religious interest he was keen to discover it, reaching out the human helping hand to the penitent, and leading him to the divine Helper.

It was this enthusiasm for the conversion of the young which led Dr. Griffith to work so earnestly in the Sunday-school. "He never was happy out of it if he could possibly be in it," said the one who knew him best of all. Whether it was the little mission he started in a private house where the primary class filled the kitchen, or the mission on Lehigh Avenue

in the days when it seemed far out of town, or at the Tabernacle, or at Upland, the testimony is always the same, of young people led to Christ by him.

Not only in the Sunday-school but in the prayer meeting, the young were uppermost in his heart, and his words and prayers were earnest for them. A young man writes: "I always felt a more earnest desire to live a Christian life when I heard Dr. Griffith pray." And several date their Christian life from such prayers. One stormy prayer-meeting night, when very few of the church-members had left their comfortable homes, a young German dropped in, perhaps for the sake of the comfortable warmth of the room. Dr. Griffith greeted him warmly, then spoke to him about salvation. He listened, became convicted, and was converted. He afterward studied for the ministry, working during vacations in one of the departments of the Publication Society. For some years this young man himself has been engaged in the work of winning souls for Christ. Another young man engaged in the periodical department was seeking the ever-near Saviour. It was early in the year when, because of the numerous orders, the working hours were prolonged until late in the evening. But the doctor requested the head of this department

Personal Ministry.

as a special favor to himself not to keep John after hours as he was anxious that he should attend inquiry meeting.

And Dr. Griffith's interest in the young did not end with their conversion. He felt the great importance of young converts being so instructed, after the foundation of faith in Christ was laid, that they might continually grow into usefulness in the church and world. He always had books and tracts for the young in his own library to give where he thought they might be helpful. He was anxious that young people should be earnest, intelligent Christians, and know what they believed as Baptists.

Seeing him once as he was preparing for his Sunday instruction at the Orphanage, I suggested some simple object lesson. He said: "I believe in object lessons, but they are out of my line; I do not know how to give them; I wish I did." And all the while he was unconscious that he was himself an object lesson to the young.

An Object Lesson.

He was not a man of many words, but as Lowell says: "Every man instinctively feels that all the beautiful sentiments in the world weigh less than a single lovely action."

As one lamp lights another, nor grows less,
So nobleness enkindleth nobleness.

A young man who grew up from boyhood in the employment of the Society, and is now manager of one of the branch houses, writes : "Dr. Griffith forgot himself in his interest in the work of the Society. His example was much more closely followed than he ever knew. His heart was so much in the work that it could hardly be otherwise. It was remarkable how soon the boys would catch this spirit. He was always earnest, courteous to all, and immovable when he was sure that he was right. These qualities greatly impressed me as a boy, and as years passed by, his noble character was more and more impressed on my mind. He could move and overcome obstacles in the most gentle way without making enemies of those he felt obliged to oppose. He had a way of leading and at the same time instructing."

His Example.

Dr. Griffith was particular and exact in regard to any business statement, and in keeping his promises. He was always cheerful, and had a pleasant word for all, even when greatly overcrowded with callers and work. He never made any careless or joking remark, but enjoyed a bright and witty saying. In all these things he was a living example for the young men meeting him daily. True it is that "if one life shines, the life next to it must catch the light."

thoughtfulness.

And how often that light was caught when he little thought it. "He was such a busy man," says one who for some years lived at Upland, "whatever of personal work he did, he had to do on the wing. He would drive around by the door of a neighbor, on his way to the city, and in just a moment's conversation leave a helpful influence to do its work while he whirled on to other duties."

How many have spoken of him as a wise counsellor to the young. His own little children never learned to be afraid of their father. Their perfect respect never interfered with their gayety in his presence. As they grew older, they chose him as a confidant of their secrets and of the bright hopes which crowd the youthful imagination, and he always listened with tenderness. A friend of the family said: "From the time I can remember, he was a good friend to me. There was no one on whose advice I depended so much. And I could confidently go to him for it, for there was no changeableness about him." A young lady who was in the employment of the Society for seven years, and is now living in another city, wrote to me: "I have the greatest reverence for Dr. Griffith. And I loved him as I would a father. In every difficulty he would listen patiently and always decide kindly but justly."

One of Dr. Griffith's noble characteristics was his generosity. No one of those under his care, was in want or need but his name headed the list of helpers. One young lady was told by her physician that she must give up or lose her life. She was greatly troubled at the prospect. The business was not his own, and her salary could not be even partly continued as might have been in a private firm ; but the doctor suggested that her fellow-employees should raise a fund for her benefit. This was done, he himself contributing very generously, and the money sent her to Atlantic City for some months. She afterward returned to her work with a new lease of life.

One case of his unchanging interest in the young is selected from many. A woman who had been nurse in the family married a sailor. She died, leaving William, an orphan boy seven years old. The father returned from sea unable in any way to care for the boy, but he was put into a home where Dr. Griffith paid the larger part of his board. Afterward, through his interest he was placed on a farm. But inheriting some of his father's propensities, after two years he ran away and shipped before the mast. Notwithstanding this, when after a year and a half's absence he returned to the city, Dr. Griffith again interested himself for him, finally

Continuing
Interest.

taking him into the employment of the Society. Owing to some physical defects, the boy was not easy to instruct. But he was not only patient with him, but insisted on those whose place it was to teach him being patient also, and was at last rewarded by seeing him become a Christian and a consistent church-member. Another, whom he was obliged to discharge, he yet persistently followed up and helped to turn to a better life.

Always Young.

With all his weight of business, he was always thoughtful for any of the young people in the building. He never grew old in feeling, so that he felt with the young folks in their pleasures as well as their sorrows. One who in her girlhood was a frequent visitor in the family circle, says: "He was always dignified, yet children were never afraid of him. He never forgot you were there; he did not overlook you because you were small and insignificant. When we were little, he would join in our games, even the romping ones." I had often noticed a peculiar tenderness in his manner toward little girls about eight or ten years old, and rather wondered, until I found that for the sake of his own "Little Bessie" such were glorified in his eyes. From about three and a half years of age for six years this little one was a helpless sufferer. Her love for the

father was sweetly touching. No one could carry her or hold her like "papa." She would lie on her little bed in the nursery where she could look out the window and watch for papa to come home. After the long day's work of care and responsibility, he would hold her, read to her, or draw her in her coach. When summoned hastily by telegraph from the rooms, because Jesus was folding his precious lamb to his bosom for her last sleep, the father's pockets were filled with the Christmas presents for her cousins and companions which the child had commissioned him to buy.

It is said that the best portion of a good man's life is the little nameless acts of kindness and of love. And one habit of this good man lives deep in the hearts of every employee in that great building. From his home at Upland would come again and again some little reminder in the form of fruit or flowers, and his thought was that each should be remembered, and those the most who had least brightness in their lives.

Little things? Nay, such deeds are not little in the sight of the Master. Moreover, the fragrance lingers in the hearts of those whose lives they brightened and sweetened. As one said to me: "We can hardly look on flowers like those he used to bring without seeming to

No Little
Things.

hear his cheery 'Good-morning.' " Well, this living is only a little while, after all. And in that land where the inhabitants never grow old, where youth is perennial, we shall meet where it is never "Good-night," but always "Good-morning."

M. G. KENNEDY.



X.

THE INDWELLING LIGHT.

“ In him was life, and the life was the light of men.”—*New Testament.*

X.

THE INDWELLING LIGHT.

THE Apostle Paul frequently speaks of a gospel intrusted to him, which he calls "my gospel." Founded on the fundamental facts of Christianity, presenting constantly and clearly the truths involved in these facts, it had as its special charge the enforcement and application of certain great principles whose development is essential to the perfection of Christian life. The influences of the former religions of the early converts, joined with inadequate views of the radical nature of the new faith, rendered these principles in peculiar danger of being misunderstood, neglected, and denied. During the lifetime of Paul, his gospel was earnestly opposed by many conscientious and devout believers. After his death, it succumbed to antagonistic forces dominant in the church, and with occasional exceptions, the voice of the apostle of freedom was silent until the Reformation in the sixteenth century.

It would not be strange, nor contrary to the

A Pauline Succession.

methods of the New Testament, if conditions and relations necessarily existing in the days of the apostles, continue in subsequent ages. It ought not to surprise us if there is a Pauline succession ; if in the process of erection of that "building fitly framed together which is growing into a holy temple in the Lord," there is allotted to a portion of the church the presentation and exposition of truths, which, consistently received, will purge New Testament Christianity from the old leaven of every foreign ingredient. This is entirely compatible with the fullest recognition of the rich spiritual gifts with which other fellow-workers are endowed by the Spirit.

The specific form of Christian life which the people called Baptists consider has been committed to their trust, is the believer's relation to the Lord Jesus Christ—personal, immediate, spiritual. The mode of receiving Christ determines the mode of living in union with him, and this determines the mode and expression of belief, work, worship, and organization.

1. The relation of the believer to Christ is a personal relation. The indispensable condition of sonship and holiness is an act voluntarily entered into between a personal Saviour and a personal believer. The opposite to this

is the theory which is held by un-Baptistic people, that a rite faithfully, earnestly, conscientiously performed by a suitable person in a suitable way, will, without any necessary participation by the person on whom the rite is performed, bring that person into a permanent relation with God which did not previously exist. The baptism of babes is an instance of this in Protestant churches, and the administration of the sacraments in the Roman Catholic Church.

2. It is an immediate relation. In its formation there can be no intervention of priest or ceremony. In the covenant between Christ and the believer there can be neither mediator nor helper. Into the inner chamber where the suppliant touches the golden sceptre of the Sovereign, the sinner must enter alone. There is a work to be done between him and Christ in which there is no spectator nor participant. Parents, teachers, friends, companions, can accompany the suppliant to the door of the presence chamber. At the threshold they may stand and pray, but they can go no farther.

An Immediate
Relation.

3. This relation is a spiritual relation. Spiritual sonship does not spring from any earthly source, however godly or pious. It is not from blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor

the will of man, but from God. Regeneration is by the Holy Spirit, and no one can find a place among the regenerate in consequence of any fleshly connection, or because of the performance of any rite whether in himself or others. That which is born of the flesh, is always flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit:

Organic Christi-
anity.

Organic Christianity is the product of these principles and must always conserve them. In the church no man nor set of men holds any nearer relation to Christ than any other man or class of men. In this, by Christ's direction, we follow a rule exactly opposite to that which he has ordained for civil society. There, we must obey those who occupy the divinely ordained seats of authority. But in the church, fathers, guides, teachers are forbidden. Every member is as near to Christ as every other member. There is no sacerdotal class, no order endowed with peculiar privileges of access to God, or gifted with functions denied to others. All members of Christ are kings and priests. No store of grace is lodged in the hands of certain custodians, to be imparted by them through sacraments or otherwise.

The worship of the church must be governed by the same principle. The performance of religious rites does not constitute Christian

worship. It is a spiritual worship, addressed to a living and present Head. All merely natural means of producing religious emotions, however effective and powerful, are forbidden. The worship of the church must be in spirit and in truth. This is the sphere, and these are the limitations.

The ordinances of the church must be the result and expression of these relations. They can never precede these relations, but must always follow them. They do not express a relation which confessedly does not exist. They do not conduct to Christ. Christ conducts to them. They are not designed to create or excite religious emotions, or to bring the recipient into a religious condition. They are the symbols of the church, declarations of its belief, manifestations of its position and relation to Christ and the world, to the old life and the new, to the past, the present, and the future. To fulfill the purpose for which they are instituted, they must be what Christ has appointed, must be administered, and must be administered in accordance with his direction. Otherwise, they are not the ordinances of Christ. They may be religious rites, but they are not Christian institutions.

The American Baptist Publication Society was founded to set forth by means of the press

The Publication
Society.

Religious Literature.

these fundamental spiritual truths. While it is under obligation to do its part with other similar Christian bodies in providing a common religious literature, its special work is to maintain the spiritual nature of Christianity. It finds in the conversation of our Lord with Nicodemus a succinct statement of the principles which it is continually to declare. These are, the necessity of regeneration ; the Holy Spirit as the sole author ; the exclusion from the new life of all that is merely natural ; a salvation by belief in Christ ; and all that pertains to a new life, a supernatural revelation.

To these principles, Dr. Griffith, our honored secretary, was absolutely faithful. It is little to say that he was faithful in the discharge of all the obligations which rested on him as the executive officer of the Society. This would have been a necessity of his nature. His fidelity to denominational principles went beyond a scrupulous fulfillment of the duties entrusted to him ; it was more than a watchful regard that the interests of the Baptist brotherhood did not suffer ; more than a jealous anxiety for the careful maintenance of the forms which are the characteristic badge of the denomination. All this might have been without any special spiritual experience. His

fidelity had a wider sweep and deeper roots—it sprang from the nature of his own spiritual life.

For his conscious relation to Christ was immediate and continual. In the weekly prayer meeting of the church of which he was a member he was always present, and rarely failed to take a vocal part. His prayer uniformly began, as did the dying prayer of the first Christian martyr, "Lord Jesus." This form of address so habitual, was the unconscious and unstudied expression of an intimate and permanent relation. His prayers in public never commenced with the words so often heard as an opening sentence : "We come into thy presence." They could not. He was always in God's presence. No prayer did he offer, and no address did he make, without the strong expression of personal imperfection, yet no sentence was there which was inconsistent with the full realization of the believer's acceptance in Christ, blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies. So his prayer was, what all Christian prayer should be, communion. There are forms and systems of prayer in which the dominant conception is of approach from a distance—the continually repeated return of the prodigal from his wanderings.

Christian
Prayer.

Such supplication finds suitable expression in the formula already quoted, "We come into thy presence"; it is a visit to the divine. There are forms and ideas of prayer which are the cries of sin and sorrow, the pleading of the unforgiven seeking relief from the intolerable burden of sin and sorrow, of shame and fear. Petitioners like these naturally crave rituals, and priests, and ceremonies. Such were not Dr. Griffith's prayers. His prayer was communion, communion with an unseen but present Saviour, communion in which every feeling of the soul found expression in the words of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "We have not a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our infirmities, but who has been in all points tempted like as we are, apart from sin; let us come therefore boldly to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and find grace for well-timed help."

Spiritual Birth. The condition and circumstances of one's spiritual birth always determine the character of the spiritual life and the conceptions of spiritual things. The influences which surrounded Dr. Griffith at the time of his conversion were such as to impress on him indelibly the stamp of the truths which we have enumerated. To him, the change in regeneration

was no evolution of the religious nature, no moral advance, but a new creation. He experienced the truth that if *any man*, no matter how just, or generous, or kind, if *any* man be in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away, *all* things have become new. The distance between the old life and the new, between the flesh and the spirit was not one of degree, but of nature. The antagonism of the church and the world, of light and darkness, of life and death, of nature and grace, was inherent and essential. The atmosphere into which Benjamin Griffith was brought at his conversion in Baltimore was one surcharged with the breath of the new life. The preaching which led him to Christ and which molded his character was peculiarly evangelical. So when to him was entrusted the duty of providing appropriate food for the various classes of the children of God, the cardinal doctrine of the new birth underlay all that received his approval.

A New Creation

Necessarily, the birth from above demands supernatural food. It cannot thrive on natural truth. So Peter says: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, desire the spiritual, unadulterated milk, that by it ye may grow unto salva-

A Paramount
Revelation.

tion." A supernatural revelation, with permanent and paramount authority, is interwoven with every thread of the Baptist idea of Christianity. Hence the place which the New Testament holds in personal and church life. Hence the repudiation of every feature of life and action which does not find its origin and support in a divine revelation. To this distinctive feature of our denomination, Dr. Griffith was pre-eminently faithful. The word of God governed his life, his plans, his work. He bowed to its authority, he studied its truths, he received its teachings, and he embraced every opportunity to teach it to others. All this he did, not as a matter of duty, but as a joyous privilege. He did not bow to the Bible as a slave to the law of his master; he could say with the psalmist: "Oh, how I love thy law; thy word have I hid in my heart; it is more precious to me than thousands of gold and silver."

Nor was Dr. Griffith ever ashamed of the name by which these distinctive doctrines are ordinarily designated. He did not shrink from the word "Baptist." He recognized its appropriateness, its significance, and power. In the Bible which he so much loved, names are of great importance. It is the name of God which declares his nature. It is the name of Christ

which declares his office. To be called the sons of God is the crowning beatitude. The highest manifestation of the divine love is that we may be called the children of God. The name Baptist is the proper name to designate the body of Christians who hold the truths specified in this chapter. In the Scripture, when certain great truths are to be determined, it is done by a reference to baptism. Is it the question of the authority of Jesus as the Messiah? The answer is: Do you acknowledge the baptism of John? Is it the question of the reception by the Jewish nation of the merciful offer of God? The answer is: They rejected the counsel of God against themselves, not being baptized with the baptism of John. Is it the question of obedience to him whom God hath made both Lord and Christ? Then they that received his word were baptized. Is it a question whether those who are saved by grace will lead a godly life? The answer is: Know ye not that so many of you as were baptized into Christ were baptized into his death? Is it a question of understanding spiritual gifts? Still the inquiry comes: Into what were ye baptized? Is it a question of faction in the church? The solvent is: Were ye baptized into the name of Paul? The place which

The Answering
Rite.

baptism occupies, as seen in these citations, is not an arbitrary one. It fulfills these functions because it is the recognized symbol of the fundamental truths of Christianity as related both to God and man.

As the symbol of these truths, Dr. Griffith did not shun the name. He would have it understood that these were the truths which he was set to promulgate and defend. Name and ordinance were precious to him because of that which they declared. As the name of the sect to which he belonged, the name was nothing. As the designation of the cardinal truths of salvation, it was sacred and glorious. It might be the badge of earthly shame and humiliation; but if it was, it was so because it proclaimed that death to self, to the world, to the past life, to all hope in nature, which is the beginning of the new life.

Faithful.

Faithful to Christ, faithful to the word of Christ, faithful to the truth of Christ, faithful to the trust of Christ, faithful to the profession of Christ, faithful to the command of Christ, faithful to duty to Christ, who can doubt that our brother has gone to hear the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

HENRY G. WESTON.

XI.

RELATIONS TO OTHER NATIONAL
SOCIETIES.

And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored all the members rejoice with it.
—*Paul.*

XI.

RELATIONS TO OTHER NATIONAL SOCIETIES.

I HAVE been asked to put on record a few words on Dr. Griffith's relations to the other denominational societies. What he was to the Publication Society, and what by the blessing of God he achieved for it, and by it, is well known. Coming to the management of its affairs in a period of general financial depression, when its administration had been unhinged by the retirement of the principal officers, secretary, treasurer, depository agent, and some members of the Board, its prospects were anything but encouraging. A Critical Time. The progress of the Religious Tract Society had been somewhat checkered and slow from its origin in 1824; but during the thirty years since its removal to Philadelphia, it had gained a recognized position among the general missionary and charitable organizations of the denomination; had secured a local habitation, as well as a name; and from an utter lack of permanent resources it now stood possessed of property

estimated to be worth about sixty thousand dollars. The work before the new secretary was to overcome the partial collapse of the situation, to inspire confidence in the management, to awaken interest in the objects of the Society, and to infuse energy and order into its operations. With what clearness of vision, with what tenacity of purpose, with what tireless industry he performed his difficult task the present state of the Society and its multiplied resources, bear ample witness.

But a man with such a mission as Dr. Griffith undertook and accomplished must necessarily be largely absorbed by it, and in it. His motto must be : " 'This one thing I do.' " It is a very common thing for a man who is thus responsible for a special service to become absorbed in his work to such a degree as practically to exclude other objects from his thought and care. In fact it is, in a large sense, the duty of such a man to give himself wholly to his accepted work. I say in a large sense ; but it need not necessarily be in an exclusive sense. For no man can fully do his duty in his special sphere who overlooks his external relations. The man who would serve his special ends in the most satisfactory way, must respect general interests. One needs a wide horizon who is laboring in any sphere for

the coming of the kingdom of God. He must apprehend the widest relations of things, that he may co-ordinate the forces which, though operating on different lines, are really interdependent and inseparable. A failure in this respect would reveal the personal limitations of the agent, and hinder the completeness of his work.

How did Dr. Griffith meet this phase of his vast and multifarious task? I bear testimony, willing and emphatic, that he formed a just estimate of his relation to other branches of Christian work, both as respected the inherent rights and the public obligations of the Society which he represented.

A Just Estimate

And this was seen first in his claim, perhaps I might say demand, that the Publication Society should receive recognition, and have a place among the chief religious organizations of American Baptists. For twenty-five years, or thereabout, after the reorganization of the Society on the broader basis which it now occupies, it continued to hold its annual meetings in Philadelphia. And for some years after it decided to meet at "the same time and place" with the Missionary Union, its sessions were held at odd hours, and at by-places in the same city. For instance, in 1857, the year of Dr. Griffith's election to the secretaryship of

the Society, the Missionary Union met at the First Church, in Boston, on Beacon Hill, while the Publication Society met with the Charles Street Church, in another and less accessible part of the city. The Missionary Union had been accorded during all the years of its history, dating back to 1814, the undivided attention of the people at its annual meetings. The Home Mission Society, formed in 1832, had kept its anniversaries in New York ; and the American and Foreign Bible Society, formed in 1836, had followed the same precedent. It was natural that the Foreign Missionary Society should hold with a degree of tenacity to the privilege of making a single and undivided impression for the great cause which it represented in its great annual gatherings. It was also natural that the younger societies, seeing the multitudes which attended the meetings of the Union, and the enthusiasm kindled by its continuous sessions of two or three days for the consideration of its noble work, should desire to avail themselves of the sacred fervors of the great annual feast. Dr. Griffith was not long in securing the advantages of a general meeting in which all the Societies should have their appropriate place in the annual convocation. He began as a Baptist to claim a place for his Baptist society. The Home Mission

Society, under the lead of the late Dr. J. S. Backus, made the same overtures. For several years these two societies continued to meet at the same place with the Missionary Union, their sessions beginning after the close of the sessions of the Union and its Board, rotating their meetings in alternate years, one of them immediately following the Union one year, and the other the year after. The Bible Society had, in the meantime, ceased to hold an open anniversary. Dr. Griffith continued in season and out of season to claim for his society an equality of privilege with the Union, and the Home Mission Society united in the claim, till finally the present tripartite arrangement was conceded by the Union. The constituency of the three societies was the same. Many of the officers of the Publication Society, including the secretary, were fast friends and liberal supporters of foreign missions, and *vice versa*. The same conditions existed in reference to the supporters of home and foreign missions, and it was inevitable that the common constituency should regulate the proceedings of these three-fold organisms for the performance of the various departments of their work. The writer of this chapter was a party to all the conferences and discussions which led to this settlement, and never will he forget the manly and gra-

cious bearing, and the mingled firmness and courtesy with which Dr. Griffith enforced his contention during the progress of the earnest conferences of the representatives of the three societies on the subject.

Obligations Ac-
knowledged.

I have referred to another respect in which Dr. Griffith has illustrated his relations to other organizations, namely, the obligations which he acknowledged to them. He cheerfully recognized their claims, and in all legitimate ways, responded to them. His personal influence and his official action alike witnessed to his loyal interest in every plan for the conversion of men and the edification of the body of Christ. I remember the strong terms in which on one occasion he referred to the influence of our foreign missions in preserving and fostering unity of faith and uniformity of practice among our Baptist churches in all parts of the land. It has always seemed a mystery to the leaders in the strongly organized denominations that a body of churches bound by no law of council or synod, and jealous of any external control, or even of external interference, are yet so coherent in policy and uniform in usage. When we tell them that these churches are grounded in New Testament precepts, and loyal to the ordinances appointed by Christ, and that they live by "the law of the

spirit of life in Christ Jesus," they still regard the mystery as unsolved. Undoubtedly these churches have found a cementing force not in organizations for ecclesiastical administration, but rather in their corporate associations for Christian evangelization. Nothing can bring people together in a union so perfect, in a concord so practical, as a common interest in the evangelization of those among whom Christ has not been named. The missionary organizations of Christendom are contributing powerfully and widely to the union of Christians of all names and orders. The three older Baptist societies, the Missionary Union, the Home Mission Society, and the Publication Society have long constituted "a three-fold cord not quickly broken," binding the whole denomination to a common work. Nor can it be denied that the work done by these societies has been attended by a deep and wide spiritual quickening in all the churches enlisted in their support. The reflex blessings of missions in all forms and departments have been so conspicuous, and so often dwelt upon, that there is no occasion to enlarge on the subject here.

The agency and influence of Dr. Griffith have been conspicuous in all co-operative ways in behalf of all enterprises set on foot by Baptists to diffuse the knowledge of Christ,

Agency and Influence.

to promote the acceptance of "the form of sound words," to instruct the ignorant, to strengthen the weak, and to edify the body of Christ. The circulation of millions on millions of pages of sacred literature, from the Bible to the simple leaflet, the companies of colporters who have traversed the unfrequented ways of life, scattering light and blessing in their course, and the Sunday-schools which have been gathered in new settlements, have proved helpful auxiliaries to the general work of home evangelization, while the mission begun in Sweden and the work aided in Germany by direct agencies, and the not inconsiderable aid furnished toward the wider circulation of the Scriptures in heathen lands, have fully exemplified the helpfulness and beneficence of Dr. Griffith's relations to the other organizations whose object is to promote the coming of the kingdom of God. His life was spent in devising plans by which the saving health of the gospel might be diffused in all lands, and among all conditions of men. His aim was to magnify Christ by magnifying his great office. He labored to make his society strong, that he might impart strength to every form of Christian enterprise. He never put forth his hand in the spirit of competition, but always worked in the way of co-operation.

His eye was always single to the glory of Christ, the prosperity of the church, and the salvation of men.

The Missionary Union will never forget the noble generosity of Dr. Griffith, and the Publication Society, in taking hold of the Swedish mission at a time when the unmanageable debt resting on its treasury forbade the undertaking of any new work. This intervention on the part of our sister society was avowedly to supply our lack of service. And it ought never to be forgotten with what cheerful magnanimity the Publication Society, under the lead of its noble secretary, in 1866, turned over to the Missionary Union a well-organized mission, consisting of one hundred and seventy-six churches with an aggregate of more than six thousand members.

The Swedish
Mission.

I feel constrained before closing this very inadequate chapter, to say a word in reference to the personal bearing of Dr. Griffith toward those with whom he had to deal. He was always transparent, direct, and sincere. His sense of honor was keen and exacting, making him scrupulous in his intercourse with his friends. He was a man with whom one could afford to differ. I never saw him ruffled or impatient in the sharpest discussion on points of difference. In reference to one question I

thought him mistaken in a policy which he had adopted for his own society, and when afterward he proposed to transfer that policy to the Missionary Union, I felt compelled by my judgment and conscience to do all in my power to prevent the consummation of the plan. But his bearing in the whole transaction was so open, manly, and Christian that I respected and loved him more than ever, and my regret for his disappointment was so strong as quite to stifle any sense of personal satisfaction I might naturally have felt for the result. He was a great-hearted, magnanimous man, whom all that knew him trusted and revered.

I may append here the minute adopted by the Executive Committee of the Missionary Union, and placed in their official record, as a fitting conclusion to the subject of Dr. Griffith's relations to other national societies :

Resolutions.

“In the death of Dr. Griffith—for thirty-five years the honored and efficient Secretary of the American Baptist Publication Society—our thoughts find natural expression in King David's words: ‘Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel.’

“We extend to our sister society our heartfelt sympathy in their great bereavement. In common with them, as a part of the great

Baptist brotherhood, we have suffered an immeasurable loss, by the removal from the helm of that skillful hand which guided the publication work of our denomination from feebleness to its present commanding position of influence and usefulness.

"But the loss sustained reaches far beyond the immediate organization upon which he lavished an absolutely untiring devotion and rare powers of administration. With characteristic large-mindedness and intelligence, he always manifested a loyal interest in all the great benevolent movements of the denomination; and with tongue, and pen, and purse contributed to their advancement. His unfailing urbanity made him a gladdening, as well as a conspicuous presence at our national anniversaries, while his ready tact and sturdy common sense have oftentimes contributed to their harmony and success. His catholic Christian sympathies took him beyond the boundaries of his own denomination, and in the deepest sense his departure leaves a lamented void in the ranks of those of every name whose lives are given to loving ministry for Christ's little ones, and to the building up of the Redeemer's kingdom on earth."

Broad Sympathies.

The Society of which Dr. Griffith was for so many years the leader and informing spirit

has a peculiar and vastly important work—a work which no other organization, however grand its object, or however universal its sphere, can eclipse or rival. The furnishing of Sunday-school libraries, the supply of poor preachers with helpful books, the circulation through colporters of the Bible and religious literature in destitute regions, the publication of denominational works which private publishers might hesitate to undertake, and which, in any event, they could not make so widely available; the scattering of tracts and leaflets broadcast over the land and over the earth, constitute a mission fraught with untold blessing to the world.

J. N. MURDOCK.

XII.

WIDE SYMPATHIES.

How e'er it be, it seems to me,
'Tis only noble to be good.
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.

—*Tennyson.*

Every man throws upon his surroundings the sunshine or the shadow of his soul.—*John Peddie.*

XII.

WIDE SYMPATHIES.

BEAUTIFUL is the twinkling star that lonely shines far out in the firmament of a dark night, and charming that flower that blooms amid the wide-spread waste of desert sands. In the eyes of the observer the brilliancy of the one is augmented by the darkness which surrounds it; and the loveliness of the other is enhanced by the absence of all things fitted to produce delight; and thus, also, in this world of clashing schemes and jarring interests, of disappointments and sorrows, of blighted hopes and broken hearts, there is nothing which more successfully relieves the gloom and softens the woes of life than kindness—sympathy.

That star in the canopy of heaven is not so beautiful, nor is that lone flower in that waste scene so lovely, as a gentle, sympathetic spirit. A spirit that glows with kindness, thrills in all its fibres with good intentions, ever animated with purposes of mercy, is the firstborn of holy love. Oh, how reviving to the tried and

afflicted is the solace which such a gentle spirit imparts ; how soothing to an anguished mind are words of kindness and sympathy from a friend. Human nature is susceptible of high cultivation ; but whatever excellencies it may possess, among all its visible virtues there are none which adorn it with a lovelier aspect than gentleness and kindness. These shed a lustre over all other traits, and invest the whole character with attractive charms ; for wherever found they impart grace and beauty. They are seeds of blessing which have always rewarded the sower with an abundant harvest.

Gentleness.

It is the gentleness which characterizes the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and the mighty but silent operations of nature which impart to them their loftiest grandeur and highest glory. It is not nature in war, but nature in repose that we love. So kindness, gentleness, sympathy are the rich jewels that adorn life that change and age cannot dim. And this we see, as we attempt to portray the life of our dear brother Griffith, to indicate some of the many adornments that have made for him a place in our hearts' affections and memories. Still, with all others, the biography would be incomplete without a space given to one of the special traits that by its exercise

has lifted him so high in the plane of universal gratitude ; nor would even that tribute, so universally given, be just and impartial nor bear its true estimate of worth without our representation therein as special participants of those wide sympathies and fraternal kindnesses that made his name and character so loved ; and also that of the great Publication Society, that mighty agent for the dissemination of gospel truth and the evangelization of the world, through which, as its representative, he became so widely known, so vastly honored, and its literature so sought, that in many a home to-day, along-side of the great men of the nation, hangs the portrait of another, a great man of the church.

Life is the manifestation of character, and such a life as we are reviewing reveals a character of no ordinary kind. Our brother had a character of his own. Courage, decision, and sympathy were special marks of that character. The thinking for himself in early life upon subjects of deepest importance, the coming to conclusions so often differing from those held by the friends whom nature had bound to him by closest ties, the honesty which prompted him to avow those conclusions, however painful the consequences of avowal might be, the willingness and determination to make

Life and Character.

The Open Heart.

his way through life to usefulness, the large sympathy manifested for others who, like himself in former days, were struggling to climb the rugged hill of duty and make their influence as men felt among men, the open heart and hand equally given to men of all conditions, circumstances, tongues, and colors, all indicate a character of rare decision, independence, and worth.

The head of a great organization especially related to a denomination having its constituents and supporters in all parts of the land, must of necessity be looked upon as a representative man. To him as counsellor, or it may be as an arbiter, men naturally come with their anxieties and perplexities. Scarcely a week passed that one or more did not seek the sympathetic advice, and often the personal aid, of the secretary of the Publication Society. Add to these demands the appeals of a similar character by mail, and there was a never-decreasing and constant demand for sympathy.

This may well be called "wide sympathy" in its character and extent. It would fill pages to recite but a portion of the appeals that reached him in his long service as a center of influence. Many of these came from men of my own race and color. It was not always financial stress for weak and struggling

churches or pecuniary aid for the distressed that claimed his attention. Equally important, and sometimes more complex difficulties were submitted. Men of affairs can hastily dismiss the former, with more or less ease, with a gift large or small of this world's goods ; but to reconcile the misunderstandings which so often arise between brethren, to suggest the wisest methods for a pastor beset with difficulties, to counsel the young student entering upon his course, or one who is young in the service, requires something more than temporary relief in pressing need. The passing manifestation of benevolence in the latter serves a purpose, but is often easily forgotten by the one who gives and him who receives. To accomplish the higher purpose and create the lasting influence needs a deeper and more abiding motive than momentary impulse. This service Dr. Griffith never declined to render. No matter how busy he might be, he had always time to listen to any real case of difficulty or trouble which seemed to call for advice or mediation. Nor was he too busy to give either of these when they were asked for. And many a pathway did he light up, and many a difficulty did he remove by his personal intervention and influence.

The position thus occupied, so conspicuous

Effective Sym-
pathy.

and so accessible, was undoubtedly conducive to the development of sympathetic feeling. Ruskin, no mean judge of mental emotions, wrote: "To cultivate sympathy you must be among living creatures and thinking about them." More than this, the emotion to be effective must be based upon lofty motives and purposes that, in spite of contrasts in sphere and individuality, recognize in the consideration an equality of feeling.

Dr. Griffith had the Christian sympathy that may be classed as something nobler and higher than mere compassion. It developed, when enlisted for a person or a cause, a community of feeling. The cause became his own. Bunyan, in his "Progress," illustrated this thought when he wrote of the Pilgrim: "Yes, I think there was a sympathy betwixt that valley and him."

The man who came with his care and anxiety, who felt as though he was depressed with his conflicts and difficulties, who was literally in the valley, felt there was soon established between him and the secretary a community of feeling, a "sympathy betwixt that valley" and the heart of the ever ready listener and tender friend.

I might produce the personal testimonies of a score of young men, aspirants for the min-

istry, students in our seminaries and colleges, who have mastered the trials that well-nigh blasted their fondest prospects, who have developed a courage to hold on and a determination to conquer the difficulties, perplexities, and sacrifices that beset such a life, only by the friendly words and practical acts of sympathy that have gone forth from his large soul and generous hand. But this were almost useless. Go where you will, especially over the South, and wherever you hear the Publication Society spoken of—and there is hardly a borough in any State where its name is unknown—you will find it embodied in him. They know and love it because of him, and because in their darkest hours and fiercest conflicts for the supremacy of truth his great acts of wide sympathy have lightened the load, scattered the gloom, and in face of almost certain defeat have brought victory.

Known and
Loved.

My own experience furnishes ample testimony on this point, and there is no evidence so conclusive as personal, when we speak. That we know. On my assuming my present pastorate in Philadelphia, in August, 1864, a position which by the grace of God I still hold, among my first acquaintances was our beloved brother; and I had his sympathy in those days, thirty years ago, when Baptist principles

had not assumed the firm foothold they maintain to-day, and when many and severe were the struggles of the Christian minister for support, both temporal and spiritual, in his efforts to overthrow the kingdom of darkness and establish God's truth as he finds it in God's word. It was owing largely to the kind, encouraging word and practical sympathy of this dear man, with one or two others of like temperament, that I have been encouraged to hold aloft through all these years the banner of our Redeemer.

He thought for himself, he acted for himself. He felt that he was responsible alone to God. Christian liberty, the unfettered freedom of the mind to do good to man whenever he saw an opportunity, was to him of inestimable value.

As Paul held fast to the glorious liberty of the sons of God, as he protested against every endeavor to narrow the Christian platform, to fetter the individual mind, as he would not for the sake of policy or peace yield an inch—so our brother clung with utmost tenacity to the freedom in which his soul rejoiced, which he felt that God designed as the birthright of every one, and in which alone Christianity could achieve its perfect triumph. To know a thing was right, in accord with truth, was

sufficient for him. Fervent and childlike were his devotions—no effort to clothe his thoughts in language for the critic's ear, but the simple outpouring of the heart. Oft I have seen him while engaged in prayer with some poor young student, allow the large tears to roll down his cheeks, drawn by the cords of sympathy to the sufferer as he felt the need of an Almighty support. Grateful for the influence through which in his own life dark and obscuring clouds had been removed, rejoicing in the light which illumined his pathway, he longed to have others brought under the same power, and be enabled to enjoy the same heavenly radiance. To this end he labored with an energy, a concentrated earnestness that made, even up to its close, every hour of his service one of intense life, and caused every word and act to count for something.

Fervent and
Childlike.

In his death humanity has lost a benefactor, the Society a faithful officer, the church an ardent supporter, the Sunday-school a zealous teacher, the Orphanage a devoted leader, the world at large a true friend; and yet, though dead, he liveth. Yes, happy that we are permitted to say he is still living, living to God and to Christ in the enjoyment of that immortal existence for which his life here was a constant preparation, and in which his mind

will be forever advancing in all true knowledge, and his soul will enjoy the companionship of the spirits of the just made perfect, of all earnest, faithful men, who, though widely separated on earth, having the message of truth on their lips, the love of truth in their hearts, and wide sympathy in their hands, the God of truth and love will accept and bless forever and ever.

THEO. DOUGHTY MILLER.



XIII.

IN HOME AND CHURCH.

The first sure symptom of a mind in health,
Is rest of heart and pleasure felt at home.

— *Young.*

I love thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode,
The church our blest Redeemer saved
With his own precious blood.

— *Dwight.*

XIII.

IN HOME AND CHURCH.

I. IN THE HOME.

IT has been well said that death is the great enhancer of values. When a great man leaves us to join "the radiant multitude beyond," his departure very naturally enhances in our thought the value of the service he has rendered. The excellencies of his character become all the more vivid when we are obliged to feel that we shall no more see his face in the flesh. When we think of his voice as hushed, we are disposed to recall most lovingly the wholesome words he was wont to speak. The tears of our sorrow help to cleanse our vision of the peculiar worth of his manhood, to clarify our judgment of his merits, and to enlarge our appreciation of the nobility that adorned his life.

In his home life Dr. Griffith was an ideal man. No man could have been more devoted to his family than he, and no man's devotion to his family could have been rewarded with a more ready and abiding affection than was

his. To an unusual degree he was a home-loving man. Here, within the quiet circle of domestic affections, he sought rest from the burdens of business. Here, surrounded by those for whom he made it so easy to respect and love him, his heart found such refreshment as it could find nowhere else. Here, in the society of his wife and children, he was the happiest of men. The rich fruitage of his public life was, in large part, due to the singular strength and beauty of his private life.

A Christian
Home.

His was in the best sense a Christian home. There was hospitality the most generous without the least ostentation, refinement without the faintest breath of coldness, and kindness without the least suggestion of insincerity. His welcome to strangers was so cordial as at once to make them feel at ease. His "I am so glad to see you!" had in it a heartiness and cheeriness that made you doubly glad to see him. His inquiries after your health and your family were such as to assure you of his genuine interest in you. During your stay with him you could not fail to be impressed with the manliness of his humility, the evenness of his disposition, his freedom from affectation, the truthfulness of his character, and the sweetness of his spirit.

In his home he was one of the most ap-

proachable of men. He was fenced in by no icy formalities. The eminent success he had achieved had not lessened his simplicity, nor impaired his humility. He knew "how to abound"; how to endure prosperity. To the representative of any worthy cause who came seeking aid, he was easily accessible. As distress with trembling lip told him its sad story, the tear of pity was wont to steal into his eye.

Mingling with his friends during a social gathering at his house, nothing gave him more pleasure than to afford pleasure to them. Sociability was as native to him as fragrance is to a rose. With him friendship was more than a sentiment. It was a principle. It was sacred. No one was more willing to make sacrifices on behalf of his friends than he. When they fell into difficulties, or were pressed by trouble, the fervor of his friendship was at once increased, and the cords that bound him to them were immediately strengthened. There are persons, among whom was he, so abounding in goodness that, while we are in contact with them, all the slumbering good in us is awakened and tries to mount upward into worthy achievement. They are like the benign zephyr that coming to the æolian harp wakes into music the strings that were silent. Intercourse with such persons clears for us our

Abounding in
Goodness.

outlook, revives our drooping purposes, and encourages us to feel that it is more possible for us to do our duty.

Christ En-
throned.

His was a home in which Christ was enthroned. Pre-eminence was cheerfully conceded to him. Primacy was readily recognized as his right. The name of Jesus was held in the highest honor. To hear Dr. Griffith pray in his home and with his family around him was instructive and inspiring. There was such realization of the goodness of God, such acknowledgment of dependence upon him, such thankfulness for mercies received, such regret for mistakes made, such distrust of human strength, such remembrance of all in need, and such pleading for continued help; he showed such acquaintance with God; he had such child-like trust in him; and his language was so simple, tender, and earnest that, listening to him, you felt that a benediction was falling on your life and that your belief in the power of prayer was greatly strengthened.

He possessed those qualities of mind and heart that enabled him with rare completeness to meet the responsibilities and to perform the duties of husband and father. He loved Christ supremely and hence his love for his family was so strong and so tender. The ties that

bound him to Christ made his family ties all the more precious to him. He was a husband so strong to lean upon because he leaned so fully on God. No companionship could have been more rich in thoughtful and helpful affection than was his. He was a father whose example was so worthy of imitation, because he so closely followed Christ as his example. Between what he as a Christian believed and what he lived there was harmony, such as they could not fail to recognize and appreciate.

Love ruled in his home. There is no servitude so deep, so rapturous, so edifying, as that under which a deep and pure love brings us. We serve most gladly those we love most devoutly. Their welfare and their wishes command our immediate service. The chains of a pure affection do not drag us down. They lift us up. Love was dominant in this beloved husband and father. It was as a girdle encircling and binding into unity all the other excellencies of his life. It made him patient and forbearing. It kept his spirit mellow. It invested his life with an atmosphere which was as genial and as stimulating as the spring-time. It rendered the interest of his family as dear to him as the apple of his eye. It showed itself particularly in those little attentions that make up so much of the happiness

A Mellow Spirit.

of home life. If any of his dear ones had trouble, he made that trouble his own. If they met with success he rejoiced over it as heartily as they. He felt with them their gladness and their sadness, their exultations and their depressions.

“Their welfare pleased him, and their cares distressed.” His fondness for children was remarkable. The childhood of a wise man always remains interesting to him. “I love God and little children,” said Richter. This is simply following the precedent established by the Lord Jesus. When Dr. Griffith’s children were small, nothing seemed to afford him more delight than to be with them and to join them in their games. This he would seem to do with as much zest as if he was really a child again. When in the morning he had kissed them a loving good-bye, and had gone to his place of business, they fondly looked for his return ; and, when their waiting was rewarded by his return, they would greet him with that eager love which his own love for them had done so much to awaken in them. During the six years’ illness of one of them, Bessie, nothing that a father can do could have been more touching than the readiness, the patience, and the tenderness with which his affection ministered to her every want and wish.

Bessie.

And he never outgrew his love for boys and girls. It affected him deeply to be assured that they regarded him as their friend. The snows of many winters might lie on his head, but they could not chill in his heart the love he had for "the little ones," those fresh creations from God's hand. This served to show how full-orbed and tropical his Christian life was. This may have accounted in a large part for that freshness and hopefulness of spirit which remained with him to the last. It would seem as if he wished to show—

Love Perennial.

How far the gulf stream of our youth may flow
Into the Arctic regions of our lives,
When little else than life itself survives.

As his own children were growing toward manhood and womanhood, he entered heartily into their purposes and ambitions. He was never too much occupied with other things to aid with his counsel and sympathy any good work in which any member of his family might be engaged; and, very much as the result of this, he had the satisfaction of knowing that his home was a fountain from which went many a stream of Christian beneficence.

II. IN THE CHURCH.

In his church life he was a model man. In his relation to the church he showed that same

intelligence and devotion to Christ that marked all the other relations in which he stood. In all that pertained to the well-being of the Upland Church, of which he was a member, he took the keenest interest, and in all ways open to him he contributed generously to its prosperity and efficiency. He loved the house of God. Nothing short of the most imperative necessity was sufficient to cause his absence from any of the services of the church.

The Pew.

In the pew he was an inspiring listener. He had the holy art of hearing. A favorite text with him was: "Take heed how ye hear." He gave the kind of attention—sympathetic—that helps a preacher to do his duty in the pulpit. He knew how to treat in a Christian way such convictions of the preacher as might not entirely agree with his own. He was not slow in expressing his gratitude for what he felt had helped him, and this he could do in a way that was in the truest sense edifying. He would rather find reasons for approving than for disapproving. With him, commendation was as much a part of criticism as condemnation, and for the former his richly charitable nature always had a decided preference. He could generally find something to commend in a sermon which the preacher felt had been a comparative failure. He was a spiritually

minded hearer, being delighted most with what was scriptural in spirit and with what was "according to Christ Jesus." Hence the kind of sermons most acceptable to such as he were just the kind which it does a man the largest spiritual good to preach. To have such hearers is an invaluable part of a preacher's spiritual education.

He was very fond of the prayer meeting. He almost always took part. No voice was more welcome than his. There were in him a modesty, a gentleness, a conciliatory tone, a tender regard for the feelings of others, and withal, a winsome dignity that made his words influential with all who heard him. His remarks were systematic, intelligible, practical, direct, suasive. He delighted in the specific. Generalities were foreign to him. He always aimed to give a personal turn to the topic under consideration. He spoke with the authority of a ripe Christian character, and with that "simplicity which is toward Christ." There was a class of topics that never failed to enlist his special interest, such as, "Fidelity to Christ in little things"; "The Lord is my Shepherd"; "What is Christ to me?" Christ was to him the most real of all realities, and hence he could make him more real to those he addressed. A burning as well as a shining

The Prayer
Meeting.

light he was, warming as well as illuminating, not only throwing light upon the path of duty, but inspiring you with zeal to pursue it.

A Holy Passion.

He had a passion for doing good under the auspices of the church. He found peculiar pleasure in the work of the Sunday-school. During such part of the year as he might be spending in Philadelphia, he must needs be doing something in this line of Christian service. Clear in conception, definite in conviction, and wise in method, his enthusiasm in this direction was well repaid. One winter he had a class in what was then a mission, but which is now the Lehigh Avenue Church. For two winters he had a teachers' class, on Wednesday evenings, in the Mantua Church. Another winter he taught a morning Bible class in the Tabernacle Church. At Upland, about 1870, a men's Bible class was formed by Bro. William Sheridan, then a student in Crozer Seminary, and now pastor in Toledo, Ohio. Shortly afterward Dr. Griffith became teacher of this class. It grew to be very large. To this was added a women's Bible class, which had been formed by Mrs. Griffith, but which she on account of lack of strength became unable to teach. The two classes, numbering about two hundred, met in the main audience room of the church with him as teacher.

His success in the work was remarkable. It affected a large part of the religious life of the village of Upland. As a Bible school teacher he had few equals. He aimed at spiritual results. The motto of the class was "For Jesus' Sake." He recognized in each member of the class one for whom Jesus had died. They knew and felt that he loved them, and that he yearned to be of spiritual help to them. He used his large influence over them to bring them more completely under the influence of the Bible. Their belief in him was such that he could and did use it as a means of strengthening their belief in the word of God. His grasp of the truths of the lesson, his unusual tact, his clearness of exposition, his aptness of illustration, his unmistakable submission to the authority of the Bible, and above all his Christ-like spirit, combined to make his work with the class conspicuous and lasting in its spiritual results.

His loyalty to his pastor was prudent, cordial, and steadfast. Having been in the pastorate himself, and knowing from personal experience the duties and burdens of that office, he easily put himself into the pastor's place. With his clear vision, ripe wisdom, reliable judgment, rare executive ability, unselfish spirit, and sympathetic heart, he was

His Loyalty.

ever ready to do anything and everything he could to cheer the heart and promote the success of his pastor. It was a genuine pleasure to listen to such suggestions as he might be induced to make. Nothing could have been more distasteful to him than the role of a dictator. He had rare facility in dealing with men, and in effecting, without friction and in a quiet way, the settlement of differences that existed between them. As when the sun, shining benignly upon two snow banks on opposite hillsides, and facing one another, melts them by degrees, so that as streams of running water they approach one another and, joined in the valley below, flow on as one stream, joyous and useful, so Dr. Griffith, who

Peacemaker. was by nature and by grace a peacemaker, was remarkably skillful in bringing together and into useful movement men who had stood apart in some unfortunate estrangement. He had very positive convictions, and he could voice them in such a manner and with such a spirit as at once to win your respectful consideration of them, if not their immediate adoption ; and if your convictions were not the same as his, you, after listening to the clear and honest expression of his, would in all probability be moved to subject your own to a careful re-examination, in order to assure your-

self that they were really sound and worthy of your earnest adherence. In the very active part he took in church work, no discord followed in his steps; no bitterness of spirit could trace its ancestry to him; and dissension would have been loth to lift its harsh voice within the circle of his personal influence.

Your belief in him made it easy for you to believe that his counsel was wise, whether or not the wisdom of it was at once apparent to you. Your confidence in his Christian character would prompt you to follow his advice, even though at the time you might not be able to see all the reasons for it. No pastor could have asked for a friend more judicious in counsel, more faithful in loyalty, and more bracing in sympathy than he was ever found to be.

There are men having such repose of mind and such equipoise of spirit, resulting from their intelligent and fixed belief in God, that they remain unmoved and unmovable by the errors and apostasies that may touch them. They are like a rock-bound peninsula reaching far out into the fretful sea of human doubts. While their address is full of charm and their life is overlaid with graciousness, you, leaning on them in church work, feel that beneath these things there is something solid—excel-

Spiritual Equi-
poise.

lent wisdom, sterling integrity, and invincible devotion to truth. Such as they have God's permission to be held in reverence and to be crowned with choice flowers produced in the hearts of those living within the atmosphere of their personal influence.

High in this class of men stood Dr. Griffith—friend, father, husband, fellow-worker with Christ, and, like Barnabas, “a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.”

C. L. WILLIAMS.

XIV.

THE ORPHANAGE.

I will shun no toil or woe,
Where thou leadest I will go,
 Be my pathway plain or rough ;
If but every hour may be
Spent in work that pleases thee,
 Oh, dear Lord, it is enough.

—*G. Tersteegen.*

XIV.

THE ORPHANAGE.

ALTHOUGH bearing so largely the burden of that great denominational society to which his life was given, Benjamin Griffith was so broad and true in his sympathies, that when any work for others commended itself to his judgment and won his heart, he gave to it his best thought and his most earnest efforts. This was especially true of the Baptist Orphanage of Philadelphia. Left an orphan at twelve years of age, the fatherless and helpless were very near to his heart. The Orphanage, now among our noblest charities, was suggested by the following incident:

An unknown pupil in the infant class of Miss Mary Weatherly, of Immanuel Mission, of the First Baptist Church, passed away, leaving a few coins, in all ninety cents. These were sent to Miss Weatherly with the following note, without date and unsigned: "Dear Miss Weatherly. The little coins contained in this paper are the childish treasures of one

A Child's Gift.

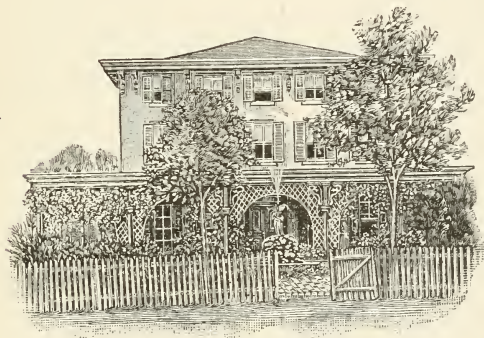
who was a pupil in the infant school under your care, but who is now, we believe, gone to be with the Lord. The objects of especial and dearest interest to this child were poor homeless children, and though of little commercial value, they are given for that purpose, and may the Lord of little children bless them in your hands." That prayer was heard. From the beginning the enterprise received manifest tokens of the favor and blessing of God.

Incorporation.

The institution was incorporated January 4th, 1879. On March 15th, 1880, the temporary home at the southeast corner of Seventeenth and Diamond Streets, was opened. Mrs. J. J. Stadiger was the first president of the Lady Managers, and Mr. and Mrs. Stadiger went there at Christmas and personally trimmed the Christmas tree. At that time there was but one orphan, a matron, and a servant girl. It was a severe winter, and the snow was half a foot deep. In those days the cars did not run to this part of the city limits. The building at Forty-fifth Street and Silverton Avenue, formerly used by the Baptist Home for Old Ladies, was entered in January, 1881. Dr. Griffith was elected a member of the Board of Trustees of the Orphanage, in January, 1883, about which time Mrs. Griffith became a member of the Board

of Lady Managers, of which Board she was elected president in 1884.

The building at Forty-fifth Street and Silvertown Avenue was found too small. It had not the necessary conveniences for such a Home. At the annual meeting in January, 1884, a joint committee of ten was appointed, with Dr. Griffith as chairman, "to select and



The Old Orphanage.

purchase a lot, secure plans, erect cottages, and direct the raising of the money to pay for the same."

After several months spent in examining many eligible locations in and around the city, on March 11, 1885, a square of ground, containing about eight acres, on Fifty-eighth Street, near Angora Station, on the West

Chester Railroad, was purchased for fourteen thousand dollars.

At this time there was only about nine thousand dollars available for lot and building purposes. It was decided therefore, to pay five thousand dollars and create a mortgage of nine thousand dollars for three years. It was agreed that it would be necessary to erect three cottages, and the estimated cost of these was twenty-six thousand dollars, with only four thousand dollars in hand. The two Boards held a joint meeting to consider the question of raising the funds to pay for these cottages. Business was dull, many persons were out of employment; the prospect was far from encouraging. But there had been much prayer for success. After some discussion as to plans, Mrs. Griffith, in a few well-chosen words, promised to pay for *one* cottage, as a memorial to her beloved, departed daughter, Bessie C. Griffith. All hearts were encouraged. Generous contributions were made by others. Soon after, Dr. Griffith secured the promise of Mrs. Margaret S. Foster to erect another cottage, as a memorial to her departed husband. The third cottage was provided for by funds raised through "The National Baptist" by "Aunt Mena," and by the children and workers in the Baptist Sunday-schools of the State.

Dr. Griffith obtained from Mr. William Bucknell a promise to pay for a fourth cottage, as a memorial to his three departed children, Leonard, Hattie, and Willie.

In the report of the committee, January, 1886, Dr. Griffith says :

“Surely the Lord has answered prayer abundantly. We started out in fear and trembling, not seeing how enough could be raised for even *one* cottage, and yet in God’s great goodness we now have *four* cottages fully provided for. Your committee asks the Boards to unite with it in most hearty thanksgiving to our Heavenly Father for the wonderful success with which he has crowned this effort of the Orphanage to provide suitable buildings.” In his final report at the next annual meeting he summarizes the work accomplished.

Answered
Prayer.

“Through the favor of God and the liberality of his people, we have been enabled to purchase eight acres, within the city limits ; to erect *four* houses capable of accomodating seventy-five children, and furnish the necessary schoolrooms ; to place upon these houses a perpetual insurance of thirty-two thousand dollars ; to erect gas works ; to bore an artesian well ; to enclose and grade grounds ; to make necessary roads and walks ; and to plant some

shade trees and shrubbery. The total cost of this entire work was sixty thousand seven hundred and eighty dollars and thirty-nine cents. It is with profound gratitude to the God of the fatherless, that we can state that every dollar of the amount has been paid."

The planting of evergreen and other trees and the beautifying of the grounds was done under the personal direction of Dr. Griffith and largely at his expense. In the report of January, 1891, the Lady Managers said :

"We have now seventy-five children filling the Griffith, Bucknell, and Children's cottages to repletion. More are knocking at our doors ; shall we say no? Shall these little hands pleading so patiently for our love and protection and watchcare be unheeded?" A plea was also made for a building for week-day and Sunday-school accommodation. Such a building would leave the Foster cottage free to do its work of sheltering twenty-five more little ones. An outbreak of diphtheria, during 1892, made the necessity of an infirmary building most apparent ; it was therefore determined to appeal to the denomination for the money necessary for an infirmary and an educational and administration building.

Dr. Griffith was, by unanimous voice, called upon again to take the chairmanship of the

Pleading Little
Ones.



THE BAPTIST ORPHANAGE.

TO NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX
TILDEN FOUNDATION

committee on plans and raising money, and was afterward appointed chairman of the building committee.

Benjamin Griffith was one whose enthusiasm was contagious. The fire that burned in his soul extended to others with whom he came in contact. He made them feel at least a measure of his intense earnestness. Men contributed liberally at his suggestion, not to escape his importunity, but because his appeals were irresistible. His tenderness touched their sympathy and enlisted their support. Would you know why he succeeded? Listen, as he asks those children in the Orphanage to pray for him and the work, and hear him say: "I prayed all the time for help when getting money for the cottages, and also with every book sent out for subscriptions last winter, and all the time as I walked the street I prayed for success."

Here was the secret of his power, constant earnest prayer for God's blessing, devout thanksgiving for each success accomplished. God honors those who honor him.

Secret of Power.

During the erection of the buildings, Dr. Griffith gave them much personal attention, visiting them almost daily. When the work was nearly finished, but not until he knew that it would be completed without debt, he passed

into the world of light to receive the Master's glad welcome, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

The buildings were opened with appropriate services, December 6, 1893, the entire cost of their erection being forty-five thousand seven hundred and sixty-nine dollars and twenty-nine cents, of which sum nearly twenty-two thousand dollars, including the cost of chapel,—eight thousand five hundred dollars, the gift of Robert H. Crozer,—was contributed through the personal efforts of Dr. and Mrs. Griffith. The infirmity building, costing nine thousand three hundred dollars, was generously paid for by John A. Riter, of the Fifth Church, Philadelphia.

One so kind-hearted, so gentle, so Christ-like as was Benjamin Griffith, could not but tenderly love little children. In his own home this was very manifest; the little ones longed for his coming. He was one of them, and he always brought brightness and gladness. For Bessie, his darling invalid child, as has been said by others, he showed the greatest tenderness. She eagerly watched for his coming from the train that he might carry her about, for she was unable to walk.

He was patient and forbearing with the

faults of children. He sympathized with them in their perplexities and trials. His custom was each morning and evening to gather the family for worship; many and earnest were the prayers for God's blessing upon them. How sweet to the loved ones at home is the memory of his affectionate morning kiss on leaving his home, and the tender evening good-night! Dr. Griffith loved all children. He believed most earnestly in the conversion of little children. His long experience had shown him that those brought to Jesus in early life made the most earnest, joyous, and useful Christians.

Home Remem-
brance.

This led him to give so much time to the spiritual wants of those in the Orphanage. He made the most careful preparation for this service. He taught these children, believing that God could and would lead them to himself. His words were those of tenderness and love. Children easily detect true love; they cannot be deceived. Their hearts responded fully and promptly. These helpless little ones with all their souls loved this good man as a father. Nowhere to-day, outside his own dear home, is he more deeply mourned than in the Baptist Orphanage. After the lesson it was his custom to hold a prayer and inquiry meeting and have personal conversation with those

seeking Jesus. These were seasons of great delight and profit.

Frequently would these children most earnestly pray for God's richest blessing upon Dr. and Mrs. Griffith. Nor was his work unblest, for one after another was led to Christ, until forty of the children had publicly confessed him and were baptized into the fellowship of the Angora Church. The cry of the psalmist was, "Renew a right spirit within me." Dr. Griffith was a man of right, constant, and steadfast spirit; to him life was a great reality. Whatever he found to do for the good of others he did with his might. He was never weary in well-doing. From May until November each Lord's Day afternoon found our brother at the Orphanage; often this was at great personal sacrifice. He returned to his home greatly fatigued, and yet he never failed to fill up his place at the evening church service; only a few hours before his death he spoke with great anxiety about the need of a suitable person to take his place. Is the life of Benjamin Griffith ended? No, no! These orphan children will feel the influence of his life more and more as the years pass on. Daily will they thank God for what he was to them, a father to the fatherless.

Cumulative Influence.

On Wednesday, October 18, 1893, Dr.

Griffith spoke at the anniversary of the Pennsylvania Baptist State Mission Society, a number of the children of the Orphanage being present. It was a touching and tender appeal, and met with a most liberal response. It was his last public address, and will be long remembered by all who heard it.

His loss was keenly felt by those associated with him in this work as indicated by the following minute, adopted by the Board of Lady Managers :

His Loss.

“It is not usual, for one bearing upon his heart and mind the burden and cares of a great work, to stoop by the way to take the hand of a little child and help to lead it along the paths its tiny feet have entered. As we look into the life of One who spake as never man spake, we find this illustrated, since bearing the burden of a lost world, he yet rests for a while and calling the little ones to his side blesses them. How divinely true to the spirit of the Master was the friend who has fallen at our side !

“As we recall the full rounded life of Dr. Griffith, that which stands out most clearly and beautifully to our vision is his untiring zeal, his sacrifice of ease and comfort, his sweet spirit of child-like humility in his personal work for these little ones, as Sunday after

Sunday, in storm or in sunshine, found him among them teaching them of him who invites even the little children, and thus leading them toward that better, higher life into the fullness of which he has now entered. When we think of the influence that he exerted upon these lives, we feel that only eternity will reveal its extent and power, and we are sure that from the Home at Angora many will rise up and call him blessed.

“As we look again, another feature of his noble work presents itself. When we remember how largely by his earnest solicitations, his unceasing perseverance, his persistent courage, his unswerving fidelity, the various buildings have been brought to completion, we feel that though he has gone, he has left behind a monument that time can never destroy. As we gaze upon his memorial, may we catch anew the inspiration and enthusiasm which were his in the work, taking it up with fresh courage where he has laid it down, each doing her part with that alert obedience, humility of spirit, kindness of heart, and forgetfulness of self, which characterized every act of his. Though he walks no longer with us, he still lives in the hearts and lives of all who knew him, for like Enoch of old, he walked with God and he was not, for God took him.

“Be it, therefore, Resolved, That we, the Managers of the Baptist Orphanage, extend to our President, Mrs. Benjamin Griffith, our heartfelt, tender, and loving sympathy, in this her bereavement, assuring her that he who was to us not only a counsellor and guide, but a faithful, true, and constant friend, shall be remembered and honored by greater earnestness and fidelity in the work which was so near his heart, and in which so much of her own life and his has been devoted. Like Aaron and Hur, we will be a stay and strength until at length the work of each shall be finished and the shout of victory shall sound out over its completion.”

The joint Boards of Trustees and Lady Managers adopted the following :

“The Baptist Orphanage is, under God, greatly indebted to the Rev. Benjamin Griffith, D. D., for the success which has attended the several efforts to erect suitable buildings. He was chairman of the Building Committee. Through his personal influence large contributions have been secured.

“His long and faithful service as a trustee and his personal work among the little ones, entitle him to our grateful remembrance. The Boards of Trustees and Lady Managers, in recognition of these services and to perpetuate his

memory, propose to raise five thousand dollars toward the endowment fund, the interest of which will perpetually sustain in the Orphanage two children, said fund to be known as the 'Benjamin Griffith Memorial Fund.'"

May the record of this life be a perpetual inspiration to noble deeds.

B. F. DENNISSON.

XV.

FRUITION.

For life, with all it yields of joy and woe,
And hope and fear,—believe the aged friend,—
Is just our chance o' the prize of learning love,
How love might be, hath been indeed, and is ;
And that we hold thenceforth to the uttermost
Such prize despite the envy of the world,
And having gained truth, keep truth ; that is all.

—*Browning's "A Death in the Desert."*

XV.

FRUITION.

THE best of men are sometimes not permitted to see and enjoy the fulfillment of their hopes and the fruits of their labors, during their stay upon the earth. Many of the world's noblest thinkers and toilers are called away before the seed they have sown has ripened into golden harvest. Like Moses they lead others through the wilderness to the borders of some shining land of promise, but are not allowed themselves to step over and appropriate the blessings they have done so much to secure. The Joshuas and Calebs who cross the separating Jordans of life and find goodly portions awaiting them beyond are, alas, apt to be few. The fruitions of earthly struggle and toil are usually given in the next and better world. Of how many may it be said, as it was of the patriarchs, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth"?

Sowing and
Reaping.

To some, however, God gives the privilege of both sowing and reaping. They are permitted, not only to lay the foundations and erect the walls of the edifice to the building of which they give their thought and endeavor, but also to furnish it and dwell within it. The value and importance of their work are recognized while they still live to carry it on. They themselves become and remain to the last, centers of influence and sources of blessing. Their later days are filled with satisfaction over successful achievement and are crowned with the confidence and affection of those who receive their benefactions, or share their friendship and toil. Out of earthly circles of honor and love they go to the nobler place which awaits them on high.

It pleased God to assign Dr. Griffith to this latter class. It was appointed to him, not only to sow the good seed of the kingdom, but also to share in the joy of the harvest which sprang from the sowing. It was given to him not only to occupy a leading position in the march through the wilderness, but also to win for himself a goodly portion in the land of promise. His later years, while full of labor were at the same time full of evidences that he had not toiled and was not toiling in vain. Great and blessed results constantly cheered him. He

occupied a high place among his fellow-men. His life was crowned with fruitions which must have greatly lightened his toils and uplifted his heart, and which, we cannot doubt, were the preludes and foretastes of those nobler rewards into which he has entered.

That this is true will be evident if we look briefly at the enterprises with which he was connected, and the spheres in which he moved.

The work to which Dr. Griffith devoted the main energies of his life, and with which his name will always be identified, was that of the American Baptist Publication Society. When he assumed the duties of the General Secretaryship of the Society its means of usefulness were limited and its opportunities small. As has been shown in preceding chapters the first years of his incumbency were years of struggle and difficulty. Lack of business capital hampered the operations of the Society. The amounts contributed for its missionary and benevolent work were comparatively meagre. Great possibilities lay before the Society, but the resources and appliances necessary to lay hold of them were not in hand. It was the day of small things.

Small Begin-
nings.

But, as time passed, all this was changed. Largely under Dr. Griffith's personal influence and management, and as a result of his wise

Expansion.

and energetic plans, the business was enlarged. More and more capital was accumulated. The Society speedily outgrew the building it had occupied and was removed to the magnificent structure it now uses. The various departments of the Society's work were more thoroughly organized. Branches were established. A line of Sunday-school papers and study helps suited to the needs of the denomination was instituted and from the first met with astonishing success. The Society became the instrument and channel of Bible revision and distribution. Not only were multitudes of books for Sunday-school libraries published, but almost as many more of higher grade for older readers were issued from its presses. A splendid commentary on the entire New Testament was given to the Christian world. Hundreds of denominational and general tracts were printed. The missionary and benevolent operation of the Society were cared for. Sunday-school missionaries and colporters were sent out into many of the States and Territories. The work of our denomination in Germany and Sweden was aided and strengthened. Grants of books and other supplies were made every year to destitute ministers, students, churches, and Sunday-schools. In later years chapel cars were built and dispatched on their

mission of love to the frontier. Indeed, it is impossible to tell in a paragraph the advances all along the line which were made during Dr. Griffith's administration of the affairs of the Society. In every way its strength and usefulness were multiplied many fold.

It was Dr. Griffith's privilege to lead in all of these advanced movements and, in his later years, to see and enjoy their magnificent results. As he looked back upon the past he could gratefully recall the hopes and plans and efforts out of which its varied successes had emerged. As he looked about him he could see the Society occupying a position of utmost strength, stability, and promise. As he looked on toward the coming years he could confidently trace still further enlargement and still greater usefulness for the institution to which he had devoted his life. He knew that the Society was now supplied with a business capital which was sufficient to meet present needs and to guard against possible financial crises. He knew that it was so thoroughly organized that even his own departure would not stop its work. He knew that it was sending all over this land and beyond the sea the word of God and a wholesome literature based on its teachings. He knew that its missionaries were carrying the gospel to the homes of

the people, and opening up everywhere fountains of blessing. From all sides there came to him reports of results which filled his soul with joy and gratitude. A more blessed fruition of a life's work could hardly be desired.

Hopes Unful-
filled.

It is true that some of the hopes of Dr. Griffith in connection with the Publication Society were not fulfilled. It was his wish and ambition to make the Society the common property and helper of all American Baptists. He greatly desired that the members of the denomination in every section of the country should stand on the same platform, so far at least as Bible and Sunday-school work was concerned. It seemed to him that such a center as the Society could offer was needed to hold all parts of the land in bonds of mutual understanding and sympathy, and he was anxious that the benefits the Society had to give might be shared on equal terms by all the States and Territories. But in this he was doomed, in some degree, to disappointment. Still he found no little compensation for whatever grief and disappointment he may have felt on this account, in the steady progress which the Society continued to make even where it had met with greatest opposition. To the very last his heart warmed to the entire Baptist brotherhood, and he knew no difference,

when appeals were made for help, between North and South or East and West.

It is true, also, that in its missionary and benevolent features, the Publication Society did not advance so rapidly as Dr. Griffith hoped. He often expressed the wish that he might see, before he died, hundreds or even thousands of consecrated men carrying the printed page and the spoken word to the homes of the people, establishing Sunday-schools, and laying the foundations of churches. But this was denied him. The churches would not, or at least did not, listen to the appeals made by him and his faithful coadjutors in the missionary department, and failed to supply the requisite funds. Still there was much to cheer him even in this regard. As compared with the work when he was first brought into connection with it, great advances had been made. In his latest years he had the joy of receiving reports from scores, at least, of earnest toilers in the mission field, and of seeing new Sunday-schools and churches in large numbers being added to the already long list of those which owed their existence to the efforts of the Society. What joy and satisfaction must he have felt as he looked over this list and witnessed its constant enlargement?

Joy in Accom-
plishment.

So far, therefore, as the great work of his

life was concerned, the closing period of Dr. Griffith's service as secretary of the Publication Society was one of glad fruition. The tree which others had planted and which he had done so much to foster was bearing the richest fruit. Large success had attended him in almost everything he had undertaken. On all sides he could see the blessed results of the efforts which he and the helpers and friends of the Society had made. How this must have lightened his toils and kindled his hopes for the future of the cause he loved so well !

The Orphanage. Next to the Publication Society, it is probable that the Orphanage occupied the largest place in Dr. Griffith's heart and life. Orphaned himself in childhood, he knew how to appreciate the condition of the little ones who had been bereft of parents, and his whole soul turned toward them with tender sympathy. So when the project of building an orphanage was broached, he gave himself to that work with his accustomed earnestness. At first, doubtless, the scheme appeared somewhat chimerical to many. But largely through the efforts of Dr. Griffith and his immediate family, edifice after edifice was erected, and abundant provision made for the comfort of the little ones who were gathered within them. Before he died, he was permitted to see this great and

good work put upon a substantial basis. When he went to the Orphanage, as he often did in his later years, he had the pleasure of being greeted by scores of happy children who looked upon him as their best friend. Indeed, he had the still higher joy of looking into the faces of not a few who by his teaching or conversation and prayers, had been led to the feet of Jesus, and thus started in the way which leads at last to the heavenly home. More blessed fruition this than even that which fell to his lot as the secretary of the Publication Society!

Dr. Griffith was greatly interested in the subject of higher education. He had struggled to secure a classical and theological training for himself, and his duties as secretary of an organization which was largely educational in its aims made it natural for him to seek to promote in every way the interests of the college and the theological seminary. Accordingly, he identified himself closely and sympathetically with the denominational schools of his vicinity. From its very beginning he served on the Board of Crozer Seminary. On the reorganization of Bucknell University, in 1882, he became a member of its new Board of Trustees, and took a most active part in everything that concerned its growth and prosperity.

Higher Educa-
tion.

In the case of both these institutions he had great reason for satisfaction. He saw the first increase until its ample accommodations were taxed to the utmost. He saw the second relieved of all financial embarrassment, provided with many additional facilities for work, and fully entered upon a new era of enlarged usefulness.

The organization of the Baptist young people, referred to in a preceding chapter, was at first a matter of great anxiety to Dr. Griffith. The burden of recognizing conflicting interests was laid largely on his shoulders. Many hours of thought and labor were expended by him in bringing upon a common platform those who differed widely as to what was best to be done. He exercised his best wisdom in devising plans and laying foundations for this enterprise, which seemed to him full of the greatest possibilities. The young people who are now profiting by his prudent measures and judicious counsels have probably little idea of the travail of soul through which he passed, and of the debt they owe him for his unceasing toils on their behalf. It pleased God to permit him to gather, before he passed from earth, abundant fruit as the result of these toils. He had the satisfaction of seeing the old-time asperities and differences disappear, and the

The Young
People.

organization of our young people spreading all over the land.

In other respects also, Dr. Griffith's later His Later Days. days were days of happy fruition. His eminent services and personal worth were everywhere recognized. He had won for himself a host of friends. Wherever he went he met with those who not only knew him but loved him for his own sake, and revered him for the work he had done. There was no assembly of Christian people to which he was not welcome. Even those who were not in full sympathy with the interests he represented, could not help listening to him with respect, and were moved by the spirit he displayed. The place he held was one which brought him not simply gratitude for services rendered or admiration for his varied abilities, but sincere personal affection. His brethren delighted to do him honor. Again and again he was made president of the Philadelphia Baptist Social Union. His sympathy and counsel were sought by young and old. His associates in the work of the Society enshrined him in their hearts. To sit by his side and talk to him was felt to be a benediction. That this is not merely the partial expression of one who long enjoyed his confidence and had learned to love him is evidenced by the fact that when the news of his sudden depart-

ure reached the rooms every one there, from the heads of the departments to the humblest employee, was smitten with a grief like that which falls upon a family when the father is taken, and to the eyes of more than one the tears came. It is also evidenced by the tributes paid him in the public press and the many resolutions of respect and sympathy which were passed by Associations and conventions all over the land. Few lives are crowned as was Dr. Griffith's with so much veneration, and gratitude, and affection. Few men are worthy to fill the place he had won.

Home Life. Nor should we forget his home life. His home was always a joy to him, and continued to be so until the last. The wife of his youth had been mercifully spared to him. His children had grown to manhood and womanhood, and were honoring him by useful Christian lives. His steps were attended by constant devotion. Everything that could administer to his comfort was provided him. From the burdens and anxieties of his public duties he could retire to a domestic circle which gave him what every weary man needs most on earth, rest and love. In a word his home was a veritable Beulah land from which he could catch glimpses of the better home on high. To be permitted to enjoy such a home until his

work was done, and then, almost without pain, to be called from its sacred precincts to rest and reward, was to have one of the sweetest and most satisfying experiences a human soul can know.

Such are some of the fruitions which Dr. Griffith was permitted to receive while he still remained and toiled on earth. It is doubtful, however, whether he thought much about them. While, indeed, he must have found a certain satisfaction in what had been accomplished and in the place he occupied, he was far too modest and too sensible of the grace of God to take credit to himself. Then too, there were still so many things he wished to do and he was in so close sympathy with what was being done, that his mind dwelt far more on his work than upon its rewards. Many men who had attained his success would have laid down their burdens and cares and retired to private life. But he could not content himself to do that. Like the Master he served he must work the works of him that sent him to the very last. It was while he was on his way from his home to his desk that he was smitten by the hand of death. Perhaps, after all, he felt that the privilege of working so long and of dying in the harness was God's best blessing to him and earth's richest reward.

To the End.

And now he has entered into the heavenly fruition. It is vain and presumptuous for us to attempt to pry into the secrets of the upper and better world. But surely we cannot for a moment doubt that, on that day when his freed spirit took its flight from the earthly home and toil, he heard the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

The mourners throng the way, and from the steeple
The funeral bell tolls slow;
But on the golden streets the holy people
Are passing to and fro:

And saying as they meet, "Rejoice, another
Long waited for has come;
The Saviour's heart is glad, a younger brother
Has reached the Father's home.

A. J. ROWLAND.

XVI.
FINAL SCENES.

Sorrowing most of all . . . that they should see his face no
more.—*New Testament.*

XVI.

FINAL SCENES.

NO place of earth was dearer to Dr. Griffith than the quiet village of Upland.

There were his home, his church, and restful retreat for body and mind.

Autumn had come to the village, and had given to it new beauty. The clear atmosphere of October and changing foliage of trees gave to lanes and meadows the appearance of perfect serenity. Other conditions afforded joy. Social distress, so great elsewhere, had passed the village by. The great mills were resounding with rapid wheels. Artisans went cheerfully and thankfully to their daily toil. Sunshine bathed the houses without and penetrated to rooms and hearts within. Little was it thought that soon a dark cloud would cover the sky, and one be taken whom all the villagers held dear.

Sunshine and
Shadow.

The departure of Dr. Griffith was sudden. It was a great shock to his friends, even to those associated with him most intimately and constantly. Yet in the light of collated facts, it seems that the event should hardly have

been so remote from the thoughts of those who came in daily contact with him. In spirit, during the last few months of his life, he appears to have felt the burden of the work committed to him, and to have been especially eager to finish his task. From thoughts expressed to friends whom he met here and there, he apparently anticipated the speedy setting of the sun. In his physical system, also, he had many warnings that his day's work was almost done.

Peculiar Earn-
estness.

During his last few months he showed peculiar earnestness and zeal along all lines of his labor. Frequently he was almost overcome with weariness, and suffered no little pain; but these could not deter him. He forced himself to further toil.

The Orphanage, to which he had given so much thought, affection, and labor, was an object of constant care and solicitude. On Wednesday evening preceding his death, he appeared before the State Mission Society, met at the Tenth Church, Philadelphia. There he plead earnestly, eloquently, that the orphans might be given their daily bread. Two days later he was at the Orphanage itself inspecting the work going on. The last Sunday afternoon he talked long and earnestly with Mrs. Griffith, trying to devise some permanent arrangement

to promote the spiritual welfare and development of the children. He remarked that he had spoken to one of the professors of the Seminary about this, and must do so again. Until a short time before, he had taken this labor upon himself. Now he appreciated that it must be provided for upon a lasting basis. The welfare of the Orphanage seemed never absent from his heart.

He showed also marked zeal in reference to the church at Upland, of which he had been a member many years. The former pastor, Prof. C. L. Williams, had just taken his departure. Dr. Griffith considered change in the pastorate a critical experience for the church. At his home, as also in the social service in the chapel, his prayers for the church were constant and unusually fervent. During the interval in which the church was without a pastor, his voice was continually heard, exciting within the members a sense of their mission, or invoking the power of the Divine Spirit. The church left to him the responsibility to appoint a committee to select another pastor, and when another had come, the zeal of Dr. Griffith knew no abatement. In prayer and exhortation he was eager that a great work of grace be wrought. The last time he spoke in the chapel, the subject considered

Marked Zeal.

was the appearance of Jesus at the sea of Tiberias. He made an earnest appeal to those who knew not the Christ standing near ; and closed with the sentence, apparently addressed to God and man : " My longing is, that the beginning of this new chapter in the history of our church be marked by great revival of God's power among us." Hardly had his face gone from those to whom he spake, when his words bore fruit, and God granted his request. As he left the church his last Sunday evening, he approached the pastor, and afforded new hope and faith through words of encouragement. It seems as though his spirit was preparing for the larger service that awaited him.

The clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober coloring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality.

Dr. Griffith wrought during the closing scenes of his life as though he appreciated even more than he had done before, the privilege of working with God on earth, and the power of such labor to prepare for still higher employ. Thus as the sun set, the path became more sober. The duties of life pointed more immediately to him who imposed them. This gave to them new coloring.

A New Coloring.

There were times when Dr. Griffith ex-

pressed himself in such a way as to suggest that he thought the hour of his departure not far off. When in Denver last May he made a brief address before the Sunday-school missionaries and those interested in the work. He there stated his conviction that his "work for the Society was nearly over." The words were spoken in such manner as to make a deep impression upon those who heard them. During the same visit, in speaking with an old friend, he alluded to the fact that he had held office in the Publication Society thirty-five years. He continued, "I have thought a number of times of resigning, but have concluded to leave the resigning business to the Lord, and keep right on in my work until he calls me." While he appeared to feel that the end drew near, he could not allow himself to dwell on the fact. He was absorbed in his service, and determined not to face "the last enemy" until he came.

Premonitions.

Cowards die many times before their deaths;
The valiant never taste of death but once.

At his home in Upland, a few weeks before he was taken, he was busy in making certain repairs. Mrs. Griffith asked him why he was so absorbed in the work and carried it to such extent. He replied: "If I were to go at any

time, I wish to leave everything in order." Another remark made to a friend at the Orphanage, was of the same nature : "This is my last work, and I wish to see that it is done well," he said, as he overlooked some work being done. Such intimations of his approaching departure seemed not unfrequently to arise in his thoughts, yet they did not harass nor cause depression. They rather incited to more strenuous effort. Like one of old, his heart's desire was, "Not courage to die that I want ; but courage to live."

More numerous were the physical premonitions ; yet these were not such as to excite alarm. Indeed, with rest and perfect immunity from care, he appeared to have no ill that might not readily be relieved. When he was fatigued or troubled, loss of appetite and dyspepsia would ensue. During the few months that preceded his final illness, he was much troubled by a matter pertaining to the Publication Society that caused perplexing thought and labor. His position as chairman of the Building Committee of the Orphanage brought upon him other cares. However weary, he was so zealous on behalf of the Orphanage that he would leave nothing undone that looked to its welfare. The last week of his life was filled with many and diverse

engagements. They came at a time when he should have had complete rest of body and mind. Instead of this, he was hurried from one task to another. Repeatedly he visited the Orphanage upon special missions. Board meetings of peculiar importance were attended. On one day he was at the State meetings held as indicated at the Tenth Baptist Church. Here he presided, in absence of the president, at one of the sessions of the Education Society. The day following he was at the session of the State Mission Society. At the close of the services the hour was late. He ran to reach his train, and arrived home exhausted.

The next day, though utterly unfitted for work, he felt that he must attend an important meeting of the Board of the Publication Society. Thus each new day brought fresh and exacting duties. When Sunday came, the close of the day found him in great pain, and hardly able to bear it. On his way home from service, repeatedly he stopped by the way, too weak and suffering too much to proceed. His age and loss of energy, made him daily less able to bear these attacks, which had become frequent. And as we have said, he needed rest. His physician has remarked, "Had Dr. Griffith taken perfect rest during the last week of his life, instead of increasing his

Exacting Duties.

labor, it is probable that he would have been with us now." But this could not have been foreseen. It appears that his time had come, and God called him home.

Tuesday morning he would have remained at home had not pressing engagements demanded his presence in the city. He stepped into the carriage, and drove to the station. Others of his family accompanied him. When they had reached Chester, he remarked, "This pain is so great." It was soon seen that he was too ill to proceed to the city, and his son, Dr. J. P. Crozer Griffith, returned with him in all haste to his home. Arrived there he was borne to his room, and soon lay upon his own bed. All was done for him that could be done. But loving service availed nothing, and in a brief while after reaching his home he was with his Lord.

The Sad News.

The sad news that Dr. Griffith had been taken was spread quickly through Upland, then to Philadelphia and places beyond. Many were the hearts stricken with sorrow, and sensible of the fact that they had lost a true friend. Those still battling in the army of Christ were dismayed and dispirited in that so brave and able a leader had been taken. Expressions of sadness and sympathy came from those in many and various walks of life.

The village of Upland appeared to be shrouded in gloom, for in all homes Dr. Griffith was a most welcome guest. The prayer meeting held the day following his death was full of pathos. Many were the expressions of esteem and sorrow that fell from different lips. At length, when the time had been spent, it was evident that each one in the large congregation would be glad to declare the burden of his heart. Dr. Henry G. Weston therefore offered a resolution of sorrow and sympathy, to which all at once responded. This was immediately taken to the afflicted family by an appointed messenger.

Similar expressions soon came from all parts of the country. Letters from a host of friends and fellow-workers; thoughts and feelings of others, expressed in columns of newspapers; resolutions from the Publication Society, Home Mission Society, Missionary Union, Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, and other organizations; also, the same from various conferences and conventions. Of these, probably the most touching were messages from the Negroes of the South. They had been befriended by Dr. Griffith in many ways, both public and private. Their expressions of sincere grief make conspicuous the greatness of heart of their benefactor—a

Expressions of
Sorrow.

greatness of heart similar to that of his Master, who came to seek and save the lost and be a friend to the poor and needy.

The Dark Day.

The funeral services took place Friday, October 27, in the Upland Church. The day was dark, and rain fell at intervals. Physical nature seemed in harmony with the spirits of those gathered to perform so sad an office. Brief prayer was offered at the home. Then the procession wended its way to the church. There was gathered a large congregation that crowded the building. The Scriptures were read and an address was made by the pastor of the church. The character of Dr. Griffith as a Christian man and laborer was portrayed by Rev. George E. Rees. The work of Dr. Griffith in connection with the Orphanage was presented by Rev. H. L. Wayland, D. D. Resolutions were read from the Publication Society and other organizations. Rev. Henry G. Weston, D. D., read the resolutions, offered a fervent and touching prayer, and then pronounced the benediction. The hymns sung were among those of which Dr. Griffith had been especially fond. As the darkness of evening gathered, the friends left the church, bore tenderly all that was mortal of their beloved companion, and slowly walked with bowed heads to the little churchyard hard by. Beneath overhanging trees and

green sod the body was laid to rest. A sweet place to rest until the morning of the resurrection.

It seems fitting that the body should sleep near the church Dr. Griffith loved so well. There his face was constantly seen among the worshipers. There his kindly hand was extended in hearty Christian fellowship to those who named the name of Christ. There his feet were swift upon errands of sympathy and love. There his voice brought many messages in season to them that are weary ; stimulated the servants of God to more serious service ; quickened faith in the presence and helpfulness of Jesus ; besought men in Christ's stead, that they be reconciled to God. Some of those who heard that voice, often stand a short while looking about the church-yard, ere they enter the sanctuary. As their eyes rest upon the last earthly dwelling-place of the body of their old and faithful friend, his words of comfort, stimulus, warning, and entreaty are recalled. It is felt that he still lives and labors. And when the worshipers unite in prayer and praise, his spirit seems to be yet among them. Where could the body so fittingly await the coming of Jesus, as in the spot where he wrought so long and valiantly to hasten that coming?

At Rest

Not a few special services were held in different parts of the land to commemorate the life and departure of this efficient laborer and true man. Probably the most noteworthy of these was that under the auspices of the Publication Society, held in the Tabernacle Baptist Church, Philadelphia. Impressive addresses were made by several of those who had wrought with Dr. Griffith in his various lines of work.

As his friends, his church, his denomination, and the Christian brotherhood, recall Dr. Griffith, they are impressed with the thought that no formal service is an adequate memorial of his life and labor. To live as he desired, to ensure the success of the works to which he was devoted, is to pay the only fitting tribute, and the one he would request. To do this, it is necessary that they who linger a little longer and lament their loss, respond to the words of one nearer and dearer to Dr. Griffith, than any other of earth: "The reality of the loss is felt more and more. The memory of his life is very precious. His was a strong arm on which to lean. But we must rely and rest upon the everlasting arms."

FRANK CHURCHILL WOODS.

XVII.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

For he was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and of
faith.—*New Testament.*

XVII.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS.

IT was a large and central place he filled in our personal affection and denominational life. It should not be a difficult task to appraise those qualities of character that gave him a controlling power in every position he occupied. The story of his influential life is a very simple one, and a child may understand it. His was not an influence achieved by skillfully laid plans or subtle art. His place of power was not reached through self-assertion or restless ambition. No one ever thought that self-considerations actuated him in any work he undertook or any policy he pursued. It was the work he had in his heart, and the assiduity and efficiency with which he devoted himself to it that led him into prominence and commanded the consideration of other men. His was the assertion of an earnest life.

In this respect he stood apart from many, for self-consciousness and solicitous guardianship over their own rights and honors characterize mankind in general. There was a

beautiful unmindfulness of himself while absorbed in his life-work.

His Humility.

This feature of his character was the outgrowth of a humility that was native in him. Added to humility was the sister quality of naturalness, which together formed the capital that adorned and crowned the column of strength. His physical appearance, the tones of his voice, the spontaneity of his manners never failed to reveal and illustrate these. We would not describe him as possessing the graces and manners of one who cultivated the arts of an elegant life. He was not a gentleman fashioned according to the prescribed regulations of an artificial society, but there were in him by nature, and developed by habit, the elements of the finest and gentlest manhood, and on every occasion, and in every company, there was the spontaneous outflowing of a nature whose instincts and principles were all on the side of kindness, refinement, and courtesy.

These were traits that won affection and commanded the allegiance and loyalty of associates and respect of all. In the great publishing house of which he was head, among all the missionaries scattered through the land, there was but one sentiment of friendship, deep and tender.

The qualities that belonged to him by birth,

and fostered by the experiences and environments of his early life were such as to afford a favorable sphere for the quickening and elevating operation of the Spirit of God. They aided rather than resisted the development of the life of Christ within him. The rugged, rampant nature requires a mightier power to bring it into subjection and to fashion it into the God likeness. Natures that are amiable, gentle, and devout, whose proclivities lean toward noblest things, are like flowers growing on our hedgerows or decking our fields with their native beauty, which put on new tints of surpassing loveliness when transplanted into sheltered gardens and cultivated by skilled hands.

Other Features.

But there were other features not often found in alliance with those we have named, and it is in this fact we find the chief reasons for the distinction and influence he attained. We refer to his clearness of vision, capacity for quick decisions, and executive force which were so conspicuous in his character. The success of his life had its roots in them. When some vital decision was reached he rarely revised it. Having decided any question prayerfully, with the best light he possessed, he then let it rest without worry or hesitation, and never expressed regret that he

had not acted otherwise, for he felt that he had acted as wisely as he knew how under existing circumstances. There was no element of harshness in his nature. He frequently said nothing was gained by sternness, and kind words had a better effect. Reproof was hardly ever upon his lips, and when mistakes or misconduct might be discovered among the employees of the Society, it was his habit to encourage them to do better. It has been said that he never issued a command; it always came in the form of a request. There was strength in his gentleness; there was method in his quietness; there was boldness in his unobtrusiveness, so that at first sight men would not fully appreciate and gauge the powers he possessed. But hidden beneath an unpretentious manner, an unassertive bearing and kindly voice, was a master-spirit which never failed to gain ascendancy in the councils of his brethren, and to bring to his side those whom he needed in the prosecution of his work.

A Master Spirit.

A man rarely accomplishes a great work unaided by others. The gift to guide the thoughts and energies of other men into the same direction as his own and thus unite their force with his is essential to greatness of character and success in any enterprise. He was

able to do this in a striking degree. One of the things that rendered this possible was that spirit of confidence which he begat in other minds as to the reliability of his own judgment and the singleness of his purpose. Another was the happy conjugal relationship he entered into in his young manhood. He was thus doubly equipped for bringing things to pass.

But his personal and denominational position was not due to any one or two conspicuous, overshadowing gifts, but to the blending of many. There was in him the grace of proportion. His life was orderly, systematic, harmonious, and balanced. There were no angles and no crevices. The curved lines of moral beauty were upon him. The intellectual stood not out in isolation, but was in fair proportion with the moral and spiritual. Strictness was softened by charity ; self-reliance, a prime element of success in every life, was allied with deference to the judgment of others ; fervor was controlled by sobriety. He therefore was not so much an enthusiast as a deeply, persistently earnest man. His mission was not to destroy, but to build—a master-builder he was, though there was no separation between him and his co-workers on account of any extraordinary gift which rose like a mountain peak from among lesser hills. He was of us and

In Fair Proportion.

with us, and the most diffident and timid found nothing in him to deter or overawe.

Greatness of
Usefulness.

He attained to greatness, and of the highest kind—the greatness of usefulness. This does not always evoke the praise of men, nor is it always proclaimed from the housetop. Sagacity, integrity, purpose, and goodness are not brilliant qualities. They do not dazzle or win quick applause ; but give them time and scope, let them have a half-century for their unfolding, and they will lay hold of the conviction of the world and win the homage of mankind. The prime quality that makes a man's life influential is goodness. This is the one thing which the knee of every man bows unto. By goodness we do not mean of course the diluted, sentimental, inoffensive, jejune thing which often goes by that name, but the aggregation and blending of many virtues. True goodness is that in which integrity of conscience, love of truth, gentleness of heart, brotherliness toward men, and reverence toward God unite and blend.

The work of his life was not the direct dealing with souls in the sense that pastors and teachers have this to do. If he counted his usefulness by the number he baptized, he would not be pre-eminent among his brethren. The doing of good is very manifold. Direct

good wrought by the individual is often a small thing compared with the indirect good accomplished by the many. The river of usefulness has many tributary streams flowing into it. The gathering of a world to Christ has many laborers working in a hundred different ways. The conversion of one soul is rarely, if ever, the fruit of a single ministry, but of many, and when the day of reckoning comes and reward is given unto all well-doers, it will be seen that both he that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together.

Dr. Griffith's life was embodied in an organization, the aim of which is to touch life at its roots by spreading intelligence and devising ways of doing good. The Spirit's gift reposed in him was that of administration, and seldom has any servant of God been guided into a realm of service where talents and duties were so divinely matched, where the law of fitness was better exemplified. Many good and true men miss their calling, or stray from the place of their appointment. Talents are not the one condition of success,—sphere and opportunity must be found as well. There are thousands of unsuccessful Christians who are unsuccessful not because of a lack of gifts, but on account of a misdirection of their gifts. There is more smothered talent in the world

The Law of Fitness.

than we have yet discovered. There are many mute, inglorious Miltons in other places than village church-yards. There are great souls buried in coal mines, and unrecognized in factories, or lost in the commonplace occupations of life, who if set free from the hampering conditions of their lives would shine like stars of the first magnitude. Oh, yes ; there are great, heroic spirits whose life is a long, deep sigh for the opportunity in which their gifts might be used. When the pastor of the Fourth Church was called to assume the management of the feeble, discouraged Society, at a time of financial difficulty, when friends were few and faint-hearted, it was a call of God, proven to be such by the widening and marvelous success which attended his administration.

Denominational
Enthusiasm.

This work gave scope for his healthful denominational enthusiasm. The purpose of the Society being the promotion of distinctive denominational beliefs, it was befitting that one with his convictions should direct its work. One out of touch with them would be manifestly unfit for the office. But while he was ardent in his church affiliations, his spirit was gentle and catholic. His treatment of other Christian bodies was fraternal and appreciative. It was not as a rival he measured their pro-

gress, but in a spirit of emulation he sought to keep step with them in their varied enterprises.

One or two things should be said of his characteristics as a Christian man, a member of the church, and head of a family. He possessed the grace which Paul speaks of as the "simplicity that is towards Christ" in an eminent degree. His natural humility found its most perfect manifestation in his childlikeness and unfeigned self-obliteration with respect to Jesus Christ. No one who knew him could fail to be impressed with the simplicity, devoutness, and diffidence of his faith. The prayer meeting was the one place where his spirit spoke in its tenderest and sincerest tones. Simplicity and humanness gave peculiar charm and power to his prayers and exhortations. It was always with unaffected modesty that he referred to his love for Christ. He never said, "I know I love Christ"; it was always, "I hope I have some love for my Saviour." It is not easy for one bearing the responsibilities of a great society six days in the week to identify himself with all the interests of his own church as if that were the only religious work upon his mind. Yet no church ever had a more sympathetic and helpful member than was to be found in him. His regularity, his uncritical interest in the preach-

Unaffected
Modesty.

ing, his sympathy with every aggressive movement of the church, betokened a life of ardent piety outside and beyond the service rendered to God and the world in his office as Secretary of the Publication Society. And these traits which marked his public career, and gave renown to his service in the kingdom of God, found, if possible, a brighter manifestation in the home, where wisdom, unselfishness, and cheerfulness were seen in unbroken union with piety and consecration.



XVIII.

CHRISTIAN FIDELITY.

Well done, good and faithful servant.—*New Testament.*

XVIII.

CHRISTIAN FIDELITY.

EACH human life is a divine instrument; a sacred stewardship. This is true of our bodily nature: health; strength; skill; voice; beauty. It is true of our mental nature: reason; imagination; memory; sensibility; eloquence. It is true of our moral nature: conscience; duty; faith; sacrifice; love. It is true of our environments: money; time; education; influence; leisure; opportunity. Every human being—oh, that every human being knew it and believed it—is God's agent; bailiff; commission merchant; consignee; factor; fief; steward; trustee. Human society itself—what is it but God's own colossal trust company? Alas, the degradation of words. Time was when there could be no richer token of confidence in the integrity of a corporation than to choose it as the custodian and manager of an instrument, whether sacred or secular.

But now this word "trust" has often come to mean the very reverse of what it once meant

—an organized betrayal of trusts ; so that we are talking of abolishing trusts altogether. Brothers in the ministry, especially entrusted with the duty of correcting public opinion, be it for us to redeem misused words, and so recover lost truths.

A Trust Fund.

Now the truth that each human life is a sacred trust fund is the truth which invests each human life with a solemn sublimity. See, for example, how the sense of a missionary intrustment bore along the Apostle Paul in his career of unique moral majesty. For instance, he writes to the Corinthians : “ Let a man so account of us, as of ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Here, moreover, it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.”

“ I have a stewardship intrusted to me.” To the Galatians he writes : “ Intrusted with the gospel of the uncircumcision.” To the Thesalonians he writes : “ The gospel of the glory of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.” “ I thank him that enabled me, even Christ Jesus our Lord, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, appointing me to his service.” “ O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, guard thy deposit.” “ I know him whom I have believed, trusted : and I am persuaded that he

is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, guard my deposit, against that day."

"I have kept the faith, maintained the trust."

Dear beloved brothers, be it for us also to be faithful stewards of Christ's mysteries, vigilantly guarding his deposits; faithful to his instruments, even unto death.

Nor does this sacred trusteeship belong to the "clergy" alone. Every true Christian—whether ordained or unordained, man or woman, patriarch or child—is a minister of Jesus Christ: a priest of God Most High. This, I repeat, is what makes every human life a possible majesty. It is not for us to say to God what his standard of measurement shall be. For aught I know, he has put as much of his own infinite skill and power into making an atom as into making a star; so that the infinitely small is in his sight as large as the infinitely vast. Accordingly, what seems to the vision of men the smallest trust of life may be to the vision of God the vastest. For our fidelity to trusts is tested, not at our large posts, but at our small points: "No chain is stronger than its weakest link." Listen to our Master: "He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much: and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous also in much."

It is the little rift within the lute
 That by-and-by will make the music mute,
 And ever widening, slowly silence all.

But he who is faithful at every little point will be found faithful in the mass. And great will be his reward : " Because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things : enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

A Day of Reck-
 oning.

For there is to be a day of reckoning, when the Lord of the household shall say to each of his stewards : " Render the account of thy stewardship." Then shall he open the judgment books, and render back to every one of his stewards, not according to some remote or indefinite standard, but according to his practical faithfulness to the trusts of time. To the steward who has been faithful to his intrusted pound, so managing it that, according to the law of moral accumulation, it had gained ten pounds more, he will say : " Well done, good and faithful trustee ; thou wert faithful to those little trusts in human time : have thou authority over ten cities, managing for me the vaster opportunities of eternity ; enter thou into my joy." To the steward who has been faithless to his entrusted pound, neglecting to manage it for his Master's interest, that Master will say : " Thou wicked and slothful trustee,

The Entrusted
 Pound.

why didst thou not invest my pound for me, so that at my coming I might have received back my own with interest?" Then shall he say to his angels: "Take ye away from him the pound, and give it unto him that hath the ten pounds; and cast ye out the unprofitable steward into the outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For unto every one that hath shall be given (principal used is interest added); and he shall have abundance (interest used is interest compounded); but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away (principal unused is principal forfeited: to gain nothing is to lose everything)."

This then is the lesson intrusted to me: Faithfulness to trusts, a duty and a privilege; or, more briefly, Christian fidelity.

But why do I speak of myself as being intrusted with this grave and precious instruction? If ever a man taught this blessed lesson by his own daily life, that man was Benjamin Griffith. For example: He was faithful to the trust of home: loving his wife, even as Christ also loved the church, and nurturing his children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord. He was faithful to the trusts of society: careful of his own example; loyal to his country; caring for the

A Daily Life
Lesson.

orphaned ; loving his neighbor as himself. He was faithful to the trusts of office : loyal to the great Society whose manifold interests he managed with such conspicuous zeal and patience and skill and success ; scrupulous in business ; strict in administration ; considerate of his employees ; vigilant in observing the signs of the times ; seizing opportunities while they were opportunities ; fostering uplifting publications and Christian colporters and Bible schools.

He was faithful to the trusts of his church : loyal to its services, private as well as public ; loyal to his pastor ; loyal to his fellow-members.

He was faithful to the trusts of his denomination : true to its creed ; its polity ; its advance in every direction, in every land.

He was faithful to the trusts of the kingdom of God : esteeming that kingdom greater than any sect, diviner than all denominations.

In brief, he was faithful to God's trust of the true riches, making to himself friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness ; so that, now that he himself has ascended, those friends have welcomed him into the Eternal Tabernacle. God grant each of us grace to follow his example.

GEO. DANA BOARDMAN.





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